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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

Conrad's Double Vision

by

© Rezaul Karim

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
Spring 1988

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ISBN 0-315-42853-8

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Dedication

To Roushan and Sameera.

Abstract

While Conrad's critics generally recognise that his vision of man is double, that he is sensitively aware of man's isolation and of his social identity, they overlook the fact that the relationship between Conrad's short fiction and novels is best understood in the light of his two-fold contemplation.

This study demonstrates that Conrad writes short stories and novels to illustrate either man's isolation or both his isolation and social integration. The analyses of four pairs of Conrad's works from his early, middle, and late periods--"The Return" and *The Secret Agent*; "Karain" and *Lord Jim*; "The Secret Sharer" and *Under Western Eyes*; and "The Planter of Malata" and *Victory*--confirm that Conrad's preoccupation with man is constant, that he views man as an isolated individual and as a social being, that he has a deep modernist awareness of human separateness and a traditional thinker's conviction of human solidarity. Conrad presents the two aspects of his vision through appropriate narrative methods: simple and single narrative perspectives, linear action, and cumulative narrative blocks in the short stories; multiple perspectives, narrative sequence, and interrupted chronology in the novels.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Professor Edward Bishop for his guidance and patience throughout the writing period. I also would like to thank Professor Dale Wilkie for her valuable suggestions.

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I. Introduction

Joseph Conrad's preoccupation with man's essential separateness finds clear expression in his letter of 2 November 1895, to Edward Noble, written ostensibly to advise the young writer to write from the depth of his personal convictions:

> Everyone must walk in the light of his own heart's gospel. No man's light is good to any of his fellows. That's my creed--from beginning to end. That's my view of life--a view that rejects all formulas, dogmas, and principles of other people's making. These are only a web of illusions. We are too varied. Another man's truth is only a dismal lie to me.[1]

The idea that we all must regard, and reject, other people's convictions as unreal and false implies that every man is alone, for nobody else can appreciate his point of view.

Conrad's letters to Cunninghame Graham, written during the end of 1897 and the beginning of 1898, equally emphasize human isolation. In a letter of 14 January 1898, Conrad says to Graham: "Half the words we use have no meaning whatever and of the other half each man understands each word after the fashion of his own folly and conceit." Then there is the letter of 31 January 1898: " . . . each man is so busy with his own futility that the handwriting of a stranger cannot be very welcome to him."[2] The emphasis on the uniqueness of human understanding and on the limitations of our efforts to reach out to others, indicate our separateness. This awareness of insularity carries over into Conrad's fiction of the period. In *Almayer's Folly*, Conrad's first novel, Nina stresses humanseparateness when in the climactic scene she makes her parting speech to her father:

---

[1] Frederick R. Karl and Lawrence Davies, eds. The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Volume I, 1861-1897 (London: Cambridge UP, 1983) 253.

> "No two human beings understand each other. They can but understand their own voices. You wanted me to dream your dreams, to see your visions. . . . But while you spoke I listened to the voice of my own self. . . ."[3]

Many of Conrad's characters are private individuals because they do not understand, relate to, or communicate with, others. Also, inner torment, anxiety, uncertainty, lack of family and social connections, ambition, and voluntary withdrawal from society isolate them from other humans. Often an isolated Conrad individual clings to some belief or sometimes identifies with an imaginary double to survive or fulfill himself, without learning to relate himself to others or loses the capacity for human relationships. To read about Conrad's characters is to form an impression of his vision of man's isolation or his understanding of man as a separate being.

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[2] Cedric Watts, ed. *Joseph Conrad's Letters to Cunninghame Graham* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1969) 65, 71.

[3] *Almayer's Folly* (London: Gresham, 1925) 179.

Yet, it would be wrong to suggest, as does David Daiches, that Conrad's finest stories are

> all concerned, directly or obliquely, with situations to which public codes--any public codes--are inapplicable, situations which cannot be related to any of the beliefs or rules which make human societies possible.[4]

Conrad's major works, indeed, deal with situations which show how an isolated character aligns himself, literally or symbolically, with a social unit--a maritime community, an indigenous people, or even an individual, such as Lena in Victory--and illustrates fellowship and a spirit of collaboration which makes life in society a reality. The character's merging into the social unit thus suggests his creator's social vision, and indicates that if Conrad was sensitively aware of the isolation of the individual, he nevertheless believed that man achieves excellence when he unites with a larger society.

Conrad's last major novel, The Shadow-Line, offers a good illustration of man's integration into community. The chiefmate-narrator of the book is, in the beginning, an alienated being, for in response to his feeling that in the community life of the ship he is losing his individuality he quits his job and cuts himself off from the members of the crew. Soon, however, he accepts the position of captain on a new ship and identifies with his shipmates. He commits himself to the responsibilities towards the crew, creates camaraderie between himself and his men, and works jointly with his cook to get the imperilled ship to a port. Thus, he illustrates the "feeling of fellowship . . . the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity . . . which binds together all humanity,"[5] and achieves excellence as he becomes a responsible member of society. The progress of the solitary individual to a social identity, whether through commitment to a group or an individual, is also the main subject in Conrad's other major novels. This development suggests what Edward Said remarked in another connection: Conrad was a "seeker after normative vision."[6] He, quite characteristically, sought peaceful sanctuary in the traditional (hence "normative") and ageless belief in man's necessary ties to society.

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[4] David Daiches, The Novel and the Modern World (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1960) 26-27.

While Conrad's critics generally recognise that his vision of man is double, that he is deeply aware of man's isolation and also of his social identity, they almost invariably overlook how his two-fold contemplation works in his closely related short fiction and novels. For example, Albert J. Guerard and John A. Palmer offer only sporadic discussions of the parallels between Conrad's shorter works and novels and do not attempt to show how the works illustrate the two aspects of the author's vision.[7] The present study is undertaken in the belief that while it is important to notice the similarities between Conrad's short and long works, their relationship is best understood in the light of the dualism in Conrad's vision. The study attempts to establish the nature of this relationship by looking at four pairs of Conrad's works--"The Return" and *The Secret Agent* ; "Karain" and *Lord Jim*; "The Secret Sharer" and *Under Western Eyes*; and "The Planter of Malata" and *Victory*.

---

[5] Joseph Conrad, *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', Typhoon and Other Stories* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1971) 12.

[6] Edward Said, *Joseph Conrad and the Fiction of Autobiography* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1966) 15.

[7] See Albert J. Guerard, *Conrad the Novelist* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1958) and John A. Palmer, *Joseph Conrad's*

Although composition dates seem to set them apart,[8] "The Return" and *The Secret Agent* share the common idea of human insularity and treat remarkably similar domestic scenes, suggesting that the novel is a reworking, if not a retelling, of the short story. Conrad wrote "Karain: A Memory" and *Lord Jim* contemporaneously,[9] and reworked in the novel the shorter work's theme to reach a different conclusion about the hero's predicament.

The composition history of the third and fourth groups of works--"The Secret Sharer" and *Under Western Eyes*; "The Planter of Malata" and *Victory*--indicates how need for money forced Conrad to drop the novels, already underway, to write

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[7] (cont'd) *Fiction: A Study in Literary Growth* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1968).

[8] They were written in 1897 and 1906 respectively. See Zdzislaw Najder, *Joseph Conrad: A Chronicle* (New Jersey: Rutgers UP, 1983) 208, 323.

[9] In his letter of 14 April 1897, to Edward Garnett, Conrad indicates the date of of the completion of "Karain": "Karain" gone to Unwin today." See Karl and Davies, 352. *Lord Jim* was begun as a short story in late May, 1898. The story got out of hand and began to expand into a novel. The novel was completed on 14 July 1890. See Frederick Karl and Lawrence Davies eds. *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Volume 2, 1898-1902 (London: Cambridge UP, 1986) 65.

the stories for magazines, re-using the novels' material; having finished the stories he returned to the unfinished novels and completed them quickly.[10]

The works in each pair are, then, closely related, a fact which justifies their detailed comparison. There is further justification for comparing them because reading one work in the light of the other illuminates what is a frequent practice of Conrad's: to recreate his vision of man's isolation or to switch from an individual to a social view, and vice versa. By examining a short story and a novel in each chapter, this thesis argues that Conrad's use of narrative forms questions the general validity of Frank O'Connor's theory:

> the novel adhere[s] to the concept of . . . society, of man as an animal who lives in a community . . . but the short story remains by its very nature remote from the community--romantic, individualistic, intransigent.[11]

In both his short fiction and his novels Conrad presents his vision of man as an isolated individual. His shorter fiction almost invariably depicts man's isolation, whereas his novels more typically present the social reality of his characters. The novels are the vehicles for the presentation of his characteristic belief: the individual's integration into society is a moral necessity. The familiar pattern in a Conrad novel is that it begins with a picture of a separate individual, but as the work progresses it shows that the individual finds fulfilment in committing himself to others. His story thus becomes the story of the "relation of man to the human communion."[12] This pattern sometimes emerges as a reaction to the narrow vision in the immediately preceding shorter work. At other times Conrad portrays a vision of individualism in the short fiction, written during a pause in the composition of the novels, and then proceeds to complete the pattern.

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[10] The story version of *Under Western Eyes* was begun before the end of 1907. See Najder 333, 564. Conrad broke off *Under Western Eyes* to write "The Secret Sharer" in late November or early December, 1909; see Frederick R. Karl, *Joseph Conrad: The Three Lives* (New York: Farrar, 1979) 354. He finished the story in less than two weeks (Najder 569), resumed work on the novel and completed it on 22 January 1910 (*Three Lives* 677). *Victory* was started around April, 1912, abandoned temporarily to write, among other works, "The Planter of Malata" (completed around 11 December, 1913); the novel was finally completed around 20 June 1914. See *Three Lives*, 747-48.

[11] Frank O'Connor, *The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story* (Cleveland: World, 1963) 80.

Whether Conrad portrays man as an individual or presents his characteristic belief, he does so through appropriate narrative methods. He re-uses the novels' material in the shorter works, and vice versa, and employs suitable techniques to adapt his material to his chosen narrative forms. In the shorter works, he manipulates single and simple narrative perspectives, predominantly linear action, delayed conflict, and slow resolution in order to focus intensely on his characters' separateness. In general, Conrad's novels have complicated versions of the shorter works' techniques. The novels use multiple perspectives, narrative sequence and interrupted chronology. By expertly using narrative sequence and dislocated chronology, in works like *The Secret Agent*, Conrad shows that his characters are separate individuals. Elsewhere, in works like *Lord Jim* and *Victory*, he shifts time to use (and shift) points of view of his characters so that he can analyse and emphasize his characters' crime against humanity or their moral deficiencies that prevent them from living in society, implying thereby the moral imperative that the characters integrate themselves into society; sometimes by means of simple time shift alone Conrad effects such analysis, emphasis, and implication. Once the characters' moral need has been made clear, Conrad presents, in a sequential narrative, his characters' ability to integrate into society. In works, like *Under Western Eyes*, Conrad, without radically shifting time, uses the points of view of various characters to analyse and emphasize his characters' crime, and to imply their moral need and ability for social integration.

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[12] Robert Penn Warren, "Introduction." Nostromo (New York: Modern, 1951) XVII.

Conrad's employment of narrative techniques appropriate for his material reflects the modernist artistic credo he declares in the preface to *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*: there he insists that the artist must exercise a "complete and unswerving devotion to the perfect blending of form and substance."[13] His use of form in the short fiction is, however, determined by the particular genre he works with:

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[13] *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', Typhoon and other Stories*, 12.

novella, short story, long short story, all of which can be placed under the taxonomy, "shorter fiction," since all three are shorter than the novel. Those shorter works by Conrad which are examined closely in this thesis belong not to the first two categories but to the last.

Before explaining why these works should be called long short stories, we would do well to attempt a brief review of the term novella, and to point out why these works cannot be called either novellas or short stories. The term novella refers to prose fiction (roughly 15,000 words to 50,000 words in length)[14] which occupies a middle ground between the tautness of the short story and expansiveness of the novel. Henry James, in a justly famous remark in the Preface to "The Lesson of the Master," referred to the form as "the beautiful and blest *nouvelle* [his term for the novella], as the "ideal" "for length and breadth." The form frees the writer from the arbitrary limits usually imposed on the short story and allows him to "do the complicated thing with a strong brevity and lucidity--to arrive on behalf of the multiplicity at a certain science of control."[15] James' conception of the novella has had many adherents, including Judith Leibowitz. In her book on the novella, she argues that the overall aesthetic effect or narrative purpose of the novel is elaboration, that of the short story is limitation, while that of the novella is intensity and expansion. The brief form enables the writer to achieve "an intense and constant focus on the subject" and to multiply or expand its implication through repeated "exploration of a limited area."[16] Surely James' and Leibowitz's formulations cannot be said to apply neatly to all works that are often regarded as novellas, but they are useful in that they provide us with some recognizable, and often applicable, attributes of the form: (1) intermediate length, which allows economical presentation and spares the reader the boredom that is usually involved in our reading of long novels; (2) concentrated focus on the subject, situation, or theme; (3) its enrichment through complication, multiplication, expansion, through the creation of "a compelling richness of implication."[17]

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[14] Mary Doyle Springer, *Forms of the Modern Novella* (Chicago & Los Angeles: U of Chicago P, 1975) 10. For an excellent review of the history and development of novella terminology, see Gerald Gillespie, "Novella, Nouvelle, Novelle, Short Novel?--A Review of Terms," *Neophilologus* 51 (1967): 117-27 and 225-30.

[15] Henry James, "Preface to 'The Lesson of the Master'" in *The Art of the Novel*, ed. R. P. Blackmur (New York: Scribner's, 1962) 220, 231.

None of the stories examined in this thesis explores its theme to achieve multiplicity or richness of implication, and to suggest some larger truth about human nature. They cannot, therefore, be called novellas. On the other hand, they cannot be said to belong to the class of the traditional short story. Somewhere near the beginning of this kind of story

> the reader is given a line of progression to

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[16] Judith Leibowitz, Narrative Purpose in the Novella (The Hague: Mouton, 1974) 16.

[17] Kerry McSweeney, "Notes on the Novella," Queen's Quarterly 83 (1976) 706.

> follow--a clear statement of the conflict, or a hint of it, or sometimes merely a sense of mystery, of tension, or a perception that a conflict exists--and from this point on he follows the [rapid movement of the] action to crisis and final resolution.''

Conrad's stories do not belong to this class because, first, they are much longer than most stories of the traditional kind (so they should be called long short stories), and, second, they deviate significantly from the traditional short story pattern (length allows the departure).

Most of Conrad's stories have a point of conflict. However, the conflict does not occur at the beginning and it does not move speedily towards denoument. "The Idiots," "The Return," and "The Planter of Malata," among others, begin backwards away from the conflict. The first, for example, opens with the narrator learning the story of the Bacadous' misfortune from different sources. He devotes the next three pages to a description of Jean Pierre's return from military service, of his marriage, of the birth of his twin boys. Seven pages into the story, the conflict is introduced: we are told of the Bacadous' discovery that the children are idiots. There is further complication when, in response to Jean Pierre's prayer for a normal boy, who would inherit his land, an idiot girl arrives, causing turmoil in the family. Instead of quickly bringing the conflict to a resolution, Conrad's narrator moves very slowly to the resolution,

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''A. L. Bader, "The Structure of the Modern Short Story," *College English* 8 (1945) 87.

taking about twelve pages to describe Susan's killing of her husband and drowning herself in the sea.

Following the introduction of the conflict, Conrad's stories sometimes shift their focus to some other elements--details about the principal character or characters, or something that happened to them in an anterior time-- and, then, return to the conflict and proceed toward denoument. In "Amy Foster," the main narrator, Dr. Kennedy, hints at the conflict when he implies that Amy's and Yanko's tragedy arises from their "irreconciliable differences."'' Instead of rapidly developing conflict and resolving it, he begins, leisurely, to tell about his impressions of Amy, the imaginative and kind girl. Then, he relates how Yanko survived a shipwreck, suffered in the hands of the English, and the like, returning finally (after twenty pages of character description) to the conflict and presenting it through the account of Amy's and Yanko's domestic differences.

Certainly, length allows such structuring of narrative. If he were to write a story of few pages, he would not have the freedom to move long distances away from the conflict and return to it, or to introduce conflict late and proceed slowly towards the end. The long short story, however, suited Conrad's purpose; it enabled him to employ appropriate form for his material, to make telling the means of presenting his vision.

''The Nigger of the 'Narcissus' Typhoon and other Stories, 230.

My examination of "The Return," "Karain" and "The Planter of Malata" will show that Conrad's stories often have an introductory section, followed by a movement which introduces the conflict and extends it or introduces the conflict and takes the reader to the hero's past; in the third movement, the conflict is resolved slowly. Conrad uses these segments cumulatively, and often linearly, to create an increasing awareness of his characters' separateness. Again, in works like "The Secret Sharer" Conrad uses the length of the narrative to provide a detailed, prolonged and intense account of the character's individuality. Told, linearly, and from his own perspective, the story consistently focuses on the narrator's isolation.

In his novels, too, Conrad employs suitable form or method for his material in order to present his vision. Ford Madox Ford memorably described one of Conrad's methods, the time-technique, which Conrad and Ford considered to be most effective:

> We agreed that the general effect of a novel must be the general effect that life makes on mankind. A novel must therefore be a narrative, a report. Life does not say to you: In 1914 my next-door neighbour, Mr. Slack, erected a greenhouse and painted it with Cox's green aluminum paint. . . . If you think about the matter you will remember, in various unordered pictures, how one day Mr. Slack appeared in his garden and contemplated the wall of his house. You

> will then try to remember the year of that occurence and will fix it as August 1914 because having had the foresight to bear the municipal stock of the city of Liege you were able to afford a first-class season ticket for the first time in your life. You will remember Mr. Slack --then much thinner because it was before he found out. . . . At this point you will remember that you were then the manager of the fresh fish branch of Messrs. Catlin and Clovis in Frenchurch Street. What a change since then! Millicent had not yet put her hair up. . .[20]

In short, in the realities of memory and perception events do not come to us in straight lines, in the manner of the linear arrangement of the 26 letters of the alphabet, but in unordered and meandering sequence. The novelist, therefore, ought not to present experience, which he reconstructs from memory, in strict chronological order, in the manner of Victorian novelists. In order to get a character into "fiction [he] could not begin at his beginning and work his life chronologically to the end. [He] must first get him in with a strong impression, and then work backwards and forwards over his past."[21] The novelist should capture mimetically the "impressions [that life] makes on our brains."[22] Conrad's shorter works hardly demonstrate such use of time; neither does their magnitude allow nor does their subject require the most complex manipulation of this time-method that we find in his deeply reflective novels, such as _Lord Jim_ and _The Secret Agent_.

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[20] Ford Madox Ford, *Joseph Conrad: A Personal Remembrance* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1924) 180-81.

[21] Ford, 129-30.

[22] Ford, 182.

In addition to the time method, Conrad used, in his fiction, the technique of multiple perspectives. He acknowledged his reliance on both of these methods in a letter to his friend and critic, Richard Curle, written in order to respond to a critic's use of the word "historical" in connection with his novels:

> My own impression is that what he really meant was that my manner of telling, perfectly devoid of familiarity between author and reader, aimed essentially at the intimacy of a personal communication, without any thought for effects. As a matter of fact, the thought for effects is there all the same (often at the expense of mere directness of narrative), and can be detected in my unconventional grouping and perspective, which are purely temperamental and wherein all my 'art' consists. This, I suspect, has been the difficulty the critics felt in classifying it as romantic or realistic. Whereas, as a matter of fact, it is fluid, depending on grouping (sequence) which shifts, and on the changing lights giving varied effects of perspective.
>
> It is in those matters gradually, but never completely mastered that the history of my books

really consists.[23]

In the major novels examined in this thesis, Conrad expertly uses, among other techniques, complex time-scheme (involving chronology and its violation) and changing points of view to analyse his characters' plights and moral situations, to present them as isolated individuals or to emphasize the realization of their social selves.

In the next four chapters, I discuss how Conrad portrays the two aspects of his total vision in his shorter works and novels. Chapter 2 deals with "The Return" and The Secret Agent; it shows how Conrad treats in a short story and a novel his vision of man's separateness, re-examines in the novel the shorter work's theme of human insularity, of its characters' incapacity to understand, relate to or communicate with others. Chapter 3 concerns the writer's portrayal of isolation in "Karain" and his offering a social vision in Lord Jim. Chapter 4 examines Conrad's presentation of an isolated character's fulfilment of personal emotional needs in "The Secret Sharer," and the author's treatment, in Under Western Eyes, of another isolated individual's integration into society. The novel portrays the individual's plight in the light of the Russian political climate, which Conrad had not examined before. Chapter 5 deals with two extreme individuals, Renouard of "The Planter of Malata" and Heyst of Victory, who willingly withdraw from society. While Renouard loses his capacity for human relationships and community life, Heyst comes to gain a social self through human relationships.

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[23] G. Jean-Aubry, Joseph Conrad: Life and Letters, Volume II (New York: Doubleday, 1927) 317.

The analyses of the four pairs of works will confirm that occasionally in both his short fiction and novels Conrad presents his vision of man's separateness. His short fiction more typically depicts man's isolation, whereas his novels frequently present the social reality of his characters. The novels are the social counterparts to the stories. Because their scope permits it, they use complicated versions of the short stories' techniques to create their author's visions. What emerges from Conrad's practice is that his preoccupation with man is constant, that he views man as a separate individual and as a social being, that he has a deep modernist awareness of human separateness and a traditional thinker's conviction of human solidarity.

II. 'The Return' and The Secret Agent

"The Return" and The Secret Agent illustrate that Conrad found both the short story and novel forms to be convenient mediums for portraying his vision of man as a separate being. In these works, Conrad anatomizes the relationships of the Herveys and the Verlocs, the only white, urban married couples in his fiction who do not acknowledge or understand one another. Conrad examines in The Secret Agent the idea of the isolation of married people, first treated in "The Return" nine years earlier, and enriches the idea by showing that not only are a husband and a wife separated from one another but the various members of the anarchists and the police as well. Thus Conrad presents fragmentation and isolation as the universal ills of modern society, and issues a warning about their destructiveness.

"The Return" opens with Alvan Hervey walking home one evening through the city of London. He and his wife had married out of self-interest and managed to live for five years a conventional and sociable home life. On returning home, Hervey finds a note from his wife telling him that she has run off with another man, astounding news that creates in the man a succession of emotions. When his wife returns and tells him that she does not have the courage to leave permanently, there follows a lengthy dialogue which makes explicit the impossibility of the Herveys' understanding each other. In the course of the dialogue, the husband recognizes that there "can be no life without faith and love."[24] But since the wife refuses to share his feelings, he leaves for ever.

"The Return" is not a story about "Hervey's sexual difficulties" with his wife, a predatory female, as Thomas Moser, and others like him, have wrongly judged,[25] but, as I shall show, about the insularity of a false union: how such a marriage isolates the partners, rendering them incapable of ever bridging the gap between them. And Conrad presents this theme through an effective narrative method, although Lawrence Graver, among others, has argued otherwise:

> Weakened by lifeless dialogue, an unconvincing setting, . . . it is an extravagantly self-indulgent story. . . . Instead of dramatizing Hervey's shallowness, Conrad holds it up for immediate disapproval. . . . Hervey is damned by relentless . . . moral descriptions, alienated from both our interest and our sympathy before he has a chance to act.[26]

Graver is not being quite fair to Conrad here. Although the story does not rank with Conrad's best short fiction[27] because of occasional overwriting and moralizing, it does, on the whole, use effectively, and necessarily, description, setting, and dialogue to focus on its theme.

---

[24] Joseph Conrad, *Tales of Unrest* (London: Gresham, 1925) 177. All subsequent references to the story, cited parenthetically in the text by page, are to this edition.

[25] Thomas Moser, *Joseph Conrad: Achievement and Decline* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1957) 71-78. See also Albert Guerard, *Conrad the Novelist* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1958) 96; Bernard C. Meyer, *Joseph Conrad: A Psychoanalytic Biography* (Princeton: Princeton UP, 1967) 124-25.

[26] Lawrence Graver, *Conrad's Short Fiction* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1965) 36, 38.

[27] However, Tom Hopkinson in "The Short Stories," *London Magazine* 4 (Nov 1957) 36, claims that "The Return" belongs to half a dozen of Conrad's best short stories which include works like "Heart of Darkness" and "Typhoon."

The story falls, roughly, into three parts: in the first, Conrad describes, in about six pages, the city and the nature of the Hervey marriage; in the second, he belatedly introduces the conflict with Mrs. Hervey's note; instead of quickly bringing the conflict to a resolution, he extends the conflict as he describes at length Hervey's reaction to his wife's note; and, in the third, he presents a lengthy dialogue between the Herveys, which slowly resolves the conflict. Conrad presents the action linearly and uses these narrative segments cumulatively, so that the reader gains an increasing understanding of the theme of insularity.

Through the account of the Hervey marriage and the city Conrad first exposes the reason for, and the nature of, insularity. What causes the Herveys' isolation is their loveless marriage. Alvan Hervey marries a "well connected, well educated and intelligent" (119-20) girl who could sustain his vanity, his belief in social respectability. Moreover, marriage offers him the prospect of owning a girl with physical charms. Following his marriage, Hervey regards his wife as one of his possessions, desiring her "masterfully . . . principally for the satisfaction of having his own way." Conrad describes Hervey's feeling toward his wife as something "no more reprehensible in its nature than a hungry man's appetite for his dinner" (120). Mrs. Hervey, too, marries not because she is in love but because marriage to the rich Hervey can release her from the boredom of her home, "where, as if packed in a tight box, her individuality--of which she was very conscious--had no play" (120).

Right from the beginning, the Herveys are apart, since they do not love each other. During the five years of their marriage, they do not question or examine their false union but complacently indulge in socially respectable activities, which widen the existing gap between them:

> She, to give her individuality fair play, took up all manner of philanthropic work and became a member of rescuing and reforming societies presided over by ladies of title. He took an active interest in politics; and having met quite by chance a literary man--who nevertheless was related to an earl--he was induced to finance a moribund society paper. . . . She received her mixed and decorous guests with a kind of tall, ponderous grace. . . . Her Thursdays were becoming famous in their world; and their world grew steadily, annexing street after street. It included also Somebody's Gardens, a Crescent--a couple of Squares. (121-22)

The Herveys' activities indicate that they follow the dictates of social approbation and of their own vanity; they are "like two skilful skaters cutting figures on thick ice for the admiration of the beholders, and disdainfully ignoring the hidden stream, the stream restless and dark; the stream of life profound and unfrozen" (123). The stream here is Conrad's metaphor for the inner life, which is vital and onward moving. Conrad suggests that true life lies beneath the surface of things, underneath the activities that govern our life. In Conrad, depth or abyss is often associated with evil, but here it is the dark river of life, of love, and men and women who do not drown themselves in this river do not live passionately. The Herveys do not immerse themselves in the river, live a life of surfaces, and put off the task of understanding and learning to love each other. In consequence, they remain insulated from each other, "unable to look at a fact, a sentiment, a principle, or a belief otherwise than in the light of their own dignity, of their own glorification, of their own advantage" (123). Each is a solipsist, unwilling to acknowledge the other, "no more capable of real intimacy than two animals feeding at the same manger under the same roof, in a luxurious stable" (122). The metaphor suggests that although they live in the same house each of the Herveys is concerned only with himself or herself just as each of the animals eating from the same box is preoccupied with its own share of food. Human beings are as distant, as unable to acknowledge another of their kind, as far apart from each other as these animals.

Conrad blends the Hervey marriage and the city in one account to present effectively the theme of his characters' isolation. The story opens with a description of the city of London which soon gives way to an examination of the Hervey marriage. The description of the city enables us to understand the Herveys' situation, suggesting Conrad's efficient use of setting:

> The Inner circle train from the City rushed impetuously out of a black hole and pulled up with a discordant, grinding racket in the smirched twilight of a West-End station. . . . A disregarded little woman in rusty black, with both arms full of parcels, ran along in distress. . . . The slamming of the carriage doors burst out sharp and spiteful like a fusillade; an icy draught mingled with acrid fumes swept the whole length of the platform and made a tottering old man, wrapped up to his ears in a woollen comforter, stop short in the moving throng to cough violently over his stick. No one spared him a glance. . . . (118)

John A. Palmer suggests that the city in "The Return" and that in The Secret Agent are remarkably similar,[24] but neglects to point out that Conrad's use of the city helps us understand his characters' isolated existence. It is a city of soot, uproar, spite and strife, not the right setting for harmonious and humane relationships. Human beings in need of attention are "disregarded"; people in London like distance from, rather than fellowship with, one another. The Herveys find the city, we may assume, therefore, congenial for maintaining a marriage that keeps them apart.

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[24] Palmer, 102.

By effectively using the description of the setting and the Herveys' marriage, then, Conrad establishes the fact of their insularity. Thereafter, his technique is to emphasize further the characters' plight. At first, he does this through the second part, which analyses Alvan Hervey's reaction to his wife's elopement and creates a stronger impression of isolation. The analysis is--as everyone agrees--extravagant. This is so because the narrator dwells, paragraph after paragraph, on the growth and nature of Hervey's psychological reality. For instance, depicting Hervey's immediate reaction to his wife's note, he writes two paragraphs of ornate prose portraying the appearance of the city and its sounds. It is true that such paragraphs prolong the story; but what is often forgotten is that they, on the whole, serve the author's purpose of showing the emergence, and reality, of his character's consciousness[21] as his old comfortable life crumbles. As Hervey looks, out of the window, at the city, he confronts an "illimitable darkness" (126). His present darkness will never end by returning him to the deceptive light of his marital bliss, just as the gaslights will never conquer the blackness of his setting. The stretching of the rows of gaslights "far away in long lines" suggests " a violent stretching of the boundaries of one's life which has the effect of destroying all that is contained within the boundaries."[39] Hervey's hearing of "a sound vast and faint" (126), and his final formulation, "She's gone" (127), suggest his coming to the full awareness of the disruption of his comfortable and convenient domestic world. Conrad's use of language is not, therefore, ornamental but functional--an evidence of his artistic control. He uses language excessively because he wants it to shape Hervey's emerging consciousness and to present the man's recurring attempts to come to terms with his new reality. Conrad needs scope to describe Hervey's feelings because Hervey must consider and reconsider what has happened to him. What is, for our purposes, significant in his presentation of Hervey's feelings is its assertion of Hervey's isolation from his wife, his total incapacity now, as before, to understand her.

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[21] See in this connection, E. L. Birdseye, "The Curse of Consciousness: A Study of Conrad's 'The Return,'" Conradiana 9 (1977): 171-78.

As Alvan Hervey attempts to come to grips with reality, he displays a succession of feelings which point up his insularity. After trying to offset his feeling of humiliation by consoling himself that his wife eloped with an "ass," he

> picked up the papers at his feet, and sat down with the wish to think it out, to understand why his wife--his wife!--should leave him, should throw away

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[39] Birdseye, 173.

> respect, comfort, peace, decency, position-throw away everything for nothing!" (128).

What the diction here betrays is Hervey's ironic incapacity to see the point of view of his wife, who obviously no longer has any use for the material advantages of a sterile marriage. Hervey cannot think of her "as a woman," who may desire a more passionate life, and he wishes she had accepted his vision of life. His preoccupation with himself soon revives his feeling of abasement, and makes a mockery of his wish to understand his wife as he pronounces four times the refrain "If she had only died" (128-29) in the space of a moment, for her death might spare him the world's calumny should the news of her elopement become public. Hervey struggles to place the blame squarely on his wife, calling her a "monster" (129), and revealing his colossal ego which prevents him from understanding what prompted his wife's action. He claims that his wife's passion has "laid its unclean hand upon the spotless draperies of his existence" (130), and adopts an attitude of moral uprightness, seeing his wife as morally lax.

As Hervey continually harps on what he considers his wife's unjust treatment of himself, he realizes that his illusion of the indestructibility of his marriage has crumbled, and he creates another illusion to survive,[31] an illusion which further emphasizes his isolation from his wife:

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[31] Hervey does this without realizing that it cannot sustain him. This illusion is different from the positive illusions of Karain and Jim, which I will discuss in the following chapter.

> He stood alone, naked and afraid, like the first man on the first day of evil. There are in life events, contacts, glimpses, that seem brutally to bring all the past to a close. There is a shock and a crash, as of a gate flung to behind one by the perfidious hand of fate. Go and seek another paradise, fool or sage. There is a moment of dumb dismay, and the wanderings must begin again; the painful explaining away of facts, the feverish raking up of illusions, the cultivation of a fresh crop of lies in the sweat of one's brow, to sustain life, to make it supportable, to make it fair, so as to hand intact to another generation of blind wanderers the charming legend of a heartless country, of a promised land, all flowers and blessings. . . . The contamination of [his wife's crime] caused a ghastly kind of clairvoyance in which he could see . . . [many men and women] at this very moment were plunged in abomination--meditated crimes. . . . He remembered all the streets--the well-to-do streets he had passed on his way home; all the innumerable houses with closed doors and curtained windows. Each seemed now an abode of anguish and folly. . . Surely, he was not the only man; his was not the only house . . . and yet no one knew--no one guessed. But he knew. . . . He was beside himself

> with a despairing agitation, like a man informed of a deadly secret--the secret of a calamity threatening the safety of mankind--the sacredness, the peace of life. (134-36)

Hervey belongs to that multitude who cultivate illusions to make life supportable. When his illusion of the permanence of his marriage crumbles, therefore, he manufactures another illusion: he is but one of many sufferers of marital infidelity. For the reader, however, the implication is that he will never be able to understand his wife, that his self-love will never allow him to see his wife's point of view. As Andreas has put it, Hervey's emotions all spring from "his wounded vanity, not one from the state of his wife's feelings."[32]

The third section of the story creates a much stronger impression of the Herveys' isolation from one another. In this part Conrad engages his characters in a conversation after Mrs. Hervey returns to her husband. In the conversation, neither side can satisfy, or even understand, the other's needs. When Hervey asks his wife, "How long do you intend to stay here?" she does not give an answer, her lips remain "closed"; Hervey "might have spoken to a dead woman. . ." (142). They have not communicated for five years and have thus erected an insurmountable obstacle between them. It is not difficult to see, therefore, why the fragments of the letter, which lay between them, should symbolize their "eternal separation" (143). Communication seems extremely difficult now that their deceptive marriage has exploded and silence seems preferable to them to words:

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[32] Osborn Andreas, Joseph Conrad: A Study in Non-Conformity (New York: Philosophical Libraray, 1959) 36.

> They were afraid to hear again the sound of their voices; they did not know what they might say--perhaps something that could not be recalled; and words are more terrible than facts (143).

As Martin Ray suggests, "Silence is attractive to Conrad's lovers for the . . . reason that speech may let loose . . . their concealed hate."[33] The Herveys are afraid of what language might reveal. Instead of resolving their crisis, language might take them further apart. To use language, to speak, is not necessarily to communicate with another human being.[34] When, unable to see that his marriage has come to an end, Hervey tries to evoke self-pity--"After all, I loved you"--the words fall on deaf ears, for his wife responds, "I didn't know" (151). Again, when Hervey says, "I've been faithful to you--and you have spoiled my life-both our lives,"

> [His wife] seemed touched by the emotion of his

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[33] Martin Ray, "Language and Silence in the Novels of Joseph Conrad," Conradiana XVL, 1 (1984): 32.

[34] The preoccupation of "The Return" with the uncommunicativeness of language anticipates fuller treatment of this theme in Conrad's later works, particularly Under Western Eyes. In this novel the teacher of languages acknowledges the limitations of language. He tries to console Natalia Haldin, who has just heard about her brother's arrest, but he "gets hold of nothing but some commonplace phrases which give the measure of our impotence before each other's trials." Under Western Eyes (London: Oxford UP, 1983) 112-13. Subsequent references to the novel are to this edition and will appear in parenthesis in the text.

> voice. Her lips quivered a little, and she made one faltering step towards him, putting out her hands in a beseeching gesture, when she perceived, just in time, that being absorbed by the tragedy of his life he had absolutely forgotten her very existence. (153)

Mrs. Hervey possesses the capacity for sympathy, which is evident in her gestures, but she cannot support her husband's solipsism, his conviction that he alone suffers. Therefore, her attempt to console and, presumably, make peace with Hervey must stop: "She stopped, and her outstretched arms fell slowly" (153).

He is completely insulated from the state of his wife's feelings, just as she is incapable of appreciating his. The characters' mutual insularity becomes very noticeable when, armed with his newly fabricated illusion of deceit, Hervey, like a fake priest (there is no difference between him and the replicas in the mirror), preaches a sermon to his wife about the necessity for self-restraint, duty, bourgeois respectability, and tries to convince her that moral turpitude is responsible for her action. She is, however, unwilling to support his egoistic illusion, which is evident in her silence throughout most of Hervey's speech. She only utters a few words in response to his exaggerated rhetoric, leading him to a perception of "silence, silence within and silence without, as though his words had stilled the tremor of all the surrounding life" (166). We may recall here how

Hervey's earlier attempt to communicate his feelings of outrage to his wife also met with her "immobility and silence" (145). Hervey finds his wife's silence unbearable and demands explanation for her action. For the reader, however, Mrs. Hervey's silence is a telling comment on her lack of interest in her husband's point of view, and her peals of laughter, raised in response to his "I forgive you . . . from a sense of duty . . ." (166), indicate the impossibility of her ever understanding the pompous and unreasonable attitude of her husband. Hervey does not understand or try to find out the cause of his wife's hysteria, for he is too preoccupied with himself: "He could not read anything, he could gather no hint of her thought" (166). Each character is immersed in her/his own selfhood, which makes communication impossible and keeps each insulated from the other. The consequence of this is the Herveys' inevitable breakup, signalled by the wife's breaking her fan in two: "Two thin pieces of ivory fell, one after another" (176).

Ultimately, the Herveys must remain apart because they cannot come close emotionally. When Hervey reveals his newly gained insight that without "faith in a human heart, love of a human being" (177) life has no meaning, she responds negatively, "This is odious" (178). Hervey, convinced that she is unwilling to share his vision of passionate life, leaves her forever.

By using the different segments of narrative linearly and cumulatively, then, Conrad stresses that the Herveys are individuals, private beings, who are insulated from one another during their crisis just as they were in the five years of their marriage.

Conrad's treatment of the city couple's isolation in "The Return" sets the work off from the other works of his early period, such as Almayer's Folly and An Outcast of the Islands, which examine the insularity of European husbands and Malay wives. Marital difficulties in these works are seen as the result of linguistic, cultural, and racial barriers. Apart from "The Return," the only other work that explores the domestic situation of English-speaking, London dwellers is The Secret Agent. Why the theme of the nature of urban marriage should engage Conrad's mind nine years after its first appearance in the story is not easy to explain. Perhaps Conrad's re-examination of the theme confirms his practice of repetition, of his tendency to redeploy the same idea as evident in works like "An Outpost of Progress" and "Heart of Darkness."[35]

There may be a more compelling reason than Conrad's work habit for his having reverted to the experience of "The Return." Before he finished the story, he wrote in 1897 to E.L. Sanderson: " . . . the trouble . . . is in the writing--Alas!--I've been 10 weeks trying to write a story

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[35] Conrad treats the theme of baseness and degradation of the European colonists in "An Outpost" (1897) and re-examines the theme in "Heart of Darkness" (1899).

["The Return"]. . . . And what I have written seems to me too contemptible for words. Not in conception perhaps--but in execution."[36] Commenting on the letter, Josep H. O'Mealy says:

> Conrad's exemption of the conception behind "The Return" from his contempt . . . seems significant. Part of that conception . . . involves the husband and wife so cursed by incompatibility and misunderstanding that the destruction of one or the other seems inevitable. And in that thread we can find a connection between this early forgotten short story and The Secret Agent.[37]

O'Mealy is right in suggesting that Conrad found the "conception" interesting and worth further exploration; however, he does not suggest what method Conrad wanted to use to examine the "conception." He would not use the story's technique because he was dissatisfied with its "execution." This concern with "execution" is evident in another letter of 1897 to Edward Garnett: " . . . my fate is to be descriptive and descriptive alone."[38] Not always a reliable and perspicacious judge of his own work, Conrad overlooks his considerably effective use of description and dialogue in "The Return." However, Conrad would have liked to be a less descriptive reporter and a more dramatic artist. He returned to the story's theme because, we may surmise, he wanted to present it more dramatically, by means of vividly realized domestic and public scenes.[39] After a descriptive opening chapter providing the necessary history of the Verlocs' marriage, there follow, in the course of the novel, therefore, three important scenes in which the Verlocs attempt to communicate. These scenes, among others, illustrate Conrad's dramatic method and contribute to the theme of marital insularity.

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[36] The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Volume 1, 367.

[37] Joseph H. O'Mealy "The Herveys and the Verlocs: The Secret Agent's Debt to 'The Return,'" Studies in Short Fiction 20(1983) 119-20.

[38] The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad, Volume 1, 370.

Before examining the domestic scenes, let us recall some of the salient facts about the Verlocs' marriage. The opening chapter describes the marriage in terms similar to those which the narrator of "The Return" uses to describe the Herveys' marriage. Like their counterparts in the earlier work, the Verlocs marry not because they love and understand each other but because they are motivated by self-interest. Verloc's reason to marry Winnie is to complement his constitutional indolence with the passive bliss of domesticity: evidently, he enjoyed getting up late, having lunch served to him in the breakfast room, the "stuffy cosiness" of which he left with "evident reluctance."[40] And as we learn later, Verloc like Hervey, treats his wife as his possession: "Mr. Verloc loved his wife as a wife should be loved--that is maritally with the regard one has for one's chief possession" (130). Also, Winnie's reason to marry is selfish. She marries Verloc to provide security for her helpless, demented, brother, Stevie, and her decrepit mother: "It appeared," Conrad writes, "that Mr. Verloc was ready to take him [Stevie] over with his mother and the furniture" (6).

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[39] See Harold E. Davis, "Conrad's Revision of The Secret Agent: A Study in Literary Impressionism," Modern Language Quarterly, 19 (1958): 244-54, for an interesting discussion of Conrad's aim in the novel: it was to render a scene, not to report.

[40] Joseph Conrad, The Secret Agent (Toronto: Bantam, 1984) 4. All further references to the novel are to this edition and will be cited parenthetically in the text.

We may recall that Conrad repeatedly suggests not only that the Verlocs make a loveless, and, therefore, sterile marriage,[4] but also, that like the Herveys, they do not examine their self-deception. In their ignorance, the Verlocs believe that everything is alright between them and they remain totally content in that belief:

> Their accord was perfect but it was not precise. It was a tacit accord, congenial to Mrs. Verloc's incuriosity and Mr. Verloc's habits of mind, which were indolent. They refrained from going to the bottom of facts and motives." (179)

The consequence of their inabiltiy or unwillingness to examine their sterile marriage is that the Verlocs, like the Herveys, fail to come together. On the contrary, they remain essentially separate: each is unable to look at a fact without ceasing to be herself or himself. Winnie is obsessed with the idea that her husband should believe Stevie to be a useful member of the family, while Mr. Verloc is preoccupied with the idea that he has to provide for three people.

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[4] Sterility is also evident in the Verlocs' case, as in the Herveys', in their being childless.

The Verlocs are, as Jocelyn Baines writes, "able to live insulated from each other, like two wires in an electric flex."[42] Like the Herveys, they are incapable of "real intimacy." While in the story Conrad shows this through a long descriptive section dealing with Hervey's reactions, and, then, through the scene in which the couple converses, the Verlocs' plight is portrayed mainly through the three important scenes of the novel, which focus on their marriage. Conrad has interwined these scenes with scenes in the outside world in a narrative which both manipulates and violates chronology for creating a vision of universal insularity. But *if* we examine the domestic scenes in isolation, the relationship between the Verlocs' and Herveys' situations becomes particularly clear. The first scene, set in a bedchamber, vividly pictures the lack of communication, the Verlocs' incapacity for closeness:

> "I haven't been feeling well for the last few days." He might have meant this as an opening to a complete confidence but Mrs. Verloc laid her head on the pillow again, and staring upward, went on: "That boy hears too much of what is talked about here. If I had known they were coming tonight I would have seen to it that he went to bed at the same time I did. He was out of mind with something he overheard about eating people's flesh and drinking blood. What's the good of talking like

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[42] Jocelyn Baines, *Joseph Conrad: A Critical Biography* (London: Weidenfield and Nicolson, 1959) 337.

> that?" (42)

The descriptive middle paragraph complements the dialogue to convey Mrs. Verloc's indifference to what her husband says: she lays her head on the pillow, stares upward and goes on to talk about Stevie's excitement, thus revealing her lack of concern for her husband, who hasn't been "feeling well for the last few days." The conversation itself dramatizes the inabilty of either Verloc to attach any sense to what the other says. Each seems to hear the other's voice "on the other side of a very thick wall" (41). Neither person can understand the other. Instead of showing the closeness of the husband and wife in bed, the scene depicts their distance. The Verlocs use language to go through the meaningless ritual of a conversation which, like the conversation between the Herveys, suggests that language hardly destroys the barrier between husband and wife when they talk; here conversation merely upholds the characters' solipsism: Winnie does not begin to comprehend Verloc's needs, nor he hers.

In order to emphasize the Verlocs' mutual insularity Conrad writes another bedroom scene in Chapter VIII, which is almost identical to the first in descriptive details and import. In the first, Conrad writes:

> [Verloc] walked about the room in his stockinged feet . . . Mr. Verloc felt the latent unfriendliness of all out of doors with a force approaching to positive bodily anguish. There is no occupation that

> fails a man more completely than that of a secret agent of police. It's like your horse suddenly falling dead under you in the midst of an uninhabited and thirsty plain. . . He beheld his wife re-enter the room and get into bed in a calm business-like manner which made him feel hopelessly lonely in the world . . . "You'll catch cold standing there," she observed. Mr. Verloc made an effort, finished undressing and got into bed. Down below in the quiet, narrow street measured footsteps approached the house, then died away, unhurried and firm, as if the passer-by had started to pace out all eternity, from gas lamp to gas lamp in a night without an end; and the drowsy ticking of the old clock on the landing became distinctly audible in the bedroom. (40-41)

The second scene uses several of the very same details:

> Recumbent and motionless, she said placidly: "You'll catch cold walking about ... like this."
> . . . He had left his boots downstairs, but he had forgotten to put his slippers on, and he had been turning about the bedroom on noiseless pads like a bear in a cage. . . . Mr. Verloc went on divesting himself of his clothing with the unnoticing inward concentration of a man undressing in the solitude of a vast and hopeless desert. . . . All was so still without and within that the lonely ticking of the

> clock stole into the room as if for the sake of company." (128-29)

Description is again a means to understanding the characters' plight. The phrase "business-like manner" suggests that Winnie's action is mechanical and that she does not feel close to her husband in the intimate surroundings of the bedroom. While Verloc broods about his horrible mission, Winnie enjoys sleepiness in bed. Their essential separateness is suggested by the mention of the lonely passer-by wandering about the city. The image of the clock further asserts the overwhelming silence in the bedroom, and also that the Verlocs do not communicate. In such a setting, attempts at dialogue simply reveal a mechanical concern for the partner's health. Thus, descriptive details and pieces of dialogue combine to point to the horrible reality of the Verlocs' marriage.

Language proves, once again, inadequate to bridge the gap between husband and wife. As Verloc tells his wife he is going to the continent the next day, Conrad describes her reaction thus: "As a matter of fact, Mrs. Verloc had heard him. Her eyes remained very wide open, and she lay very still, confirmed in her instinctive conviction that things don't bear looking into very much" (130). As the Verlocs go on to talk, they do not exchange their feelings; language thus becomes the means of suggesting the distance between the characters:

> "I'll be away a week or perhaps a fortnight. Get

> Mrs. Neale to come for the day." ....
> There is no need to have the woman here all day. I
> shall do very well with Stevie." . . .
> "Shall I put out the light?" . . .
> "Put it out." (131)

Mrs. Verloc speaks her words "in the tone of the shallowest indifference" and Mr. Verloc "snapped at his wife huskily" (131). Conversation never results in communication.

In the climactic scene of the novel, Conrad further reiterates the Verlocs' isolation, their distance from each other. In this scene, as in that between Hervey and his wife, the husband tries to win sympathy and nourish self-pity when he talks to his wife,[43] but the wife responds negatively. Instead of accepting his responsibility for Stevie's death, he endeavours to place the blame on his employers who ordered the bomb outrage: "You don't know what a brute I had to deal with. After all these years! A man like me!" (173). He goes on to elaborate on his secret activities, for the past seven years, taking "for the first time in his life that incurious woman into his confidence" (174), in the hope that she will understand he had to do what he did because he had to provide for three people. Ironically, however, Verloc's account of his underground activities cannot win sympathy for him, for his wife remains as far removed from him as ever:

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[43] Neville Newhouse is the first of those critics who have noticed the similarity between Hervey's action after his marriage has received its deathblow with his wife's attempted elopement and Verloc's attempt to arouse self-pity following the murder of Stevie. Newhouse writes: "The germ of this scene [in which Verloc lectures his wife] is to be found in the early . . . short story 'The Return'." Joseph Conrad (London: Evans, 1966).

> When he looked up he was startled by the inappropriate character of his wife's stare . . . its attention was peculiar and not satisfactory . . . it seemed concentrated upon some point beyond Mr Verloc's person (174-75).

Not only in evoking self-pity but also in his insistence "Do be reasonable Winnie," Verloc resembles Hervey, who lectures his wife. Verloc, too, is "absorbed by the tragedy of his own life"; he cannot understand the nature or the whole extent of his wife's affection for her brother since "it was impossible for him to understand it without ceasing to be himself" (170). The effect on his wife of Verloc's self-assertion is strikingly similar to that of Hervey's on his wife. She is unwilling to support his need for self-pity, for she cannot understand his emotions. She remains absorbed in her own grief and responds, like Mrs. Hervey, to her husband's words with silence. We should note here that like Alvan Hervey, Verloc finds his wife's silence unbearable:

> "Can't you say something? You have your own dodges for vexing a man. Oh yes! I know your deaf-and-dumb-trick. I've seen you at it before to-day. But now it won't do. . . . One can't tell whether one is talking to a dummy or to a live woman." (186)

Like Mrs Hervey's silence, Winnie's silence suggests that she is obsessed with her own thoughts just as her husband is with his: "this man took the boy away to murder him . . . " (179). As Verloc attempts to read his wife by examining her body, "as if he would read the effect of his words," she remains very far removed from him. Although she does not break an object in halves to signal the end of her marriage, as does Mrs. Hervey, she does mentally declare her separation from the man. When Verloc announces his plan to live abroad with her following a jail term, she "began to look at herself as released from all earthly ties. She had her freedom. Her contact with existence, as represented by the man standing over there, was at an end" (183).

Like the Herveys, the Verlocs remain insulated during their crisis as during their relatively peaceful years. Their attempts to communicate simply reveal that they are strangers, two private individuals, unable to reach out to one another. They illustrate what Marlow remarks in another connection:

> It is only when we try to grapple with another man's most intimate need that we perceive how incomprehensible, wavering and misty are the beings that share with us the sight of the stars and the warmth of the sun.[44]

The relationship between "The Return" and The Secret Agent, however, is not limited to the works' parallels, which indicate their characters' isolation. The novel also relates to the story as whole to fragment and illustrates Ian Watt's view that "implicit in the novel form in general [there] is the premise that the novel is a full . . . report of human experience."[45] While the story mainly concerns the insularity of two human beings, the novel that of many, for Conrad links the story of the Verlocs' isolation to that of the separateness of many other characters in society who belong to different groups, and thus he creates a fuller range of experience in the novel. We should note, however, that the idea of the link between the domestic problems of modern life and those of the other members of society is present in the story, but the idea is not given any prominence in the shorter work. At the beginning of "The Return" one gets the impression that Conrad is writing a story about the isolation of all members of the modern English society. Writing of the crowd at the railway station, Conrad says:

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[44] Lord Jim, 179-80.

> . . . Their indifferent faces were varied but somehow suggested kinship, like the faces of a band of brothers who through prudence, dignity, disgust, or foresight would resolutely ignore each other. . . . Outside the big doorway of the street they scattered in all directions, walking away fast from

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[45] See Mary Rohrberger, *Hawthorne and the Modern Short Story: A Study in Genre* (The Hague: Mouton, 1966) 125. For an interesting discussion of the short story as incomplete or fragmentary with respect to the wholeness of the novel, see Mary Louise Pratt, "The Short Story: The Long and Short of It," *Poetics* 10 (1981): 175-94.

> one another with the hurried air of men fleeing from something compromising; from familiarity or confidences . . . . (120)

The "kinship" of the city dwellers is based on indifference to, and ignorance of, each other; they dislike company and confidence of others and avoid human contact. However, the reader, who is soon presented with an account of the Hervey marriage, begins to see that Conrad's purpose in the story is not to present elaborately this initial picture of the insularity of an entire society but that of two of its members. The reader perceives that although Conrad is aware of a link between the domestic insularity of the Herveys and that of isolation in society, he chooses to treat the former as his main concern. And in so doing, he may, unknowingly, have been saving the idea of the conjunction between the domestic and social insularity for its fuller treatment in The Secret Agent, which treats the two realms--home and outside world--in an intertwined plot.

In order to blend the two realms, Conrad makes the novel's plot structure different from that of the story and relates the plight of the Verlocs to the moral situations of the many other insulated and fragmented souls. Whereas a simple, linear and cumulative arrangement of narrative blocks was suitable for his purposes in the story, a more complex organization of narrative sequence, involving chronology and its disruption, becomes necessary to achieve his goal in the novel. His object here is to show the link between the Verlocs' domestic insularity and public isolation to illustrate that the Verlocs as well as the other members of this society are private individuals.

The manipulation of sequence and its disruption both suggest the novelist's preoccupation with human insularity. The first three chapters, with a relatively linear and temporal order, contribute significantly to the novel's theme. Chapter 1 presents important facts about the Verlocs' marriage suggesting, among other things, the Verlocs' separateness:

> His [Verloc's] evenings were occupied. His work was in a way political, he told Winnie once. She would have, he warned her, to be very nice to his political friends. And with her straight, unfathomable glance she answered that she would be so, of course. (4)

The fact that Verloc withholds, from Winnie, the information about the nature of his work and that Winnie is not interested in finding out what it is that keeps him occupied in the evenings suggests they are fragmented souls. Verloc cannot trust his wife with his secret activities, and Winnie, too, has her own secret, the welfare of Stevie, the object of her "maternal vigilance"(6), which is the reason why she married Verloc and which she keeps from her husband. The emphatic "of course" implies her willingness to do anything in order to ensure Stevie's security. Both husband and wife are, then, two private beings with their own secrets.

Chapter 2 follows chronologically from chapter 1 and reiterates the theme of insularity by juxtaposing the domestic situation with the situation in the outside world. The interview between Vladimir and Verloc, in which the former continually chides the latter for his obesity and sloth, which have kept him from performing his duties, shows that the employer and the employed are as distant from one another as husband and wife:

> "You give yourself for an 'agent provocateur.' The proper business for an 'agent provocateur' is to provoke. As far as I can judge from your record kept here, you have done nothing to earn your money for the last three years."
>
> "Nothing!" exclaimed Verloc, stirring not a limb, and not raising his eyes, but with the note of sincere feeling in his tone. "I have several times prevented what might have been---" (17)

The two men talk at cross-purposes, each convinced of the truth of his point of view and the falsity of that of the other. The division between these two characters is paralleled by that between politically allied nations. Britain and Russia are allies only apparently: they seek to work together to destroy the anarchist movement but the Russians cannot trust the British and work secretly to provoke a bomb outrage which, they hope, will lead to the suppression of anarchism.

The fragmentation in the political world has its counterpart in the domestic scene in this chapter. As Verloc returns home from the Embassy with the fateful order to blow up the Greenwich observatory, he sits down on a wooden sofa. The narrator, the merciless examiner of the human condition, then reports:

> No one appeared to disturb his solitude. . . . Mrs. Verloc, warned in the kitchen by the clatter of the cracked bell, had merely come to the glazed door of the parlour, and putting the curtain aside a little, had peered into the dim shop. Seeing her husband sitting there shadowy and bulky, with his hat tilted far back on his head, she had at once returned to her stove. An hour or more later she took the green baize apron off her brother Stevie. . . . (26)

Ordinarily, a wife would come to her husband and sit by him, enquiring how he spent the time he had been away from home. Winnie acts differently because emotionally she is distant from Verloc; the door between her and Verloc suggests this, as do the adverbs "merely" and "at once". She is not the least interested in her husband's welfare, for she does not try to find out why he should leave his hat on while relaxing inside the home. Her lack of feeling for Verloc becomes clearer when, an hour later, he comes to dinner ". . . his overcoat and hat on, without uttering a word" (26), and she remains uninquisitive about his behaviour. Such behaviour indicates that the man suffers, but Winnie simply accepts it as something Verloc routinely displays. As well, Verloc's sitting there in the parlour by himself, not sharing, with his wife, the burden of his mission, suggests his separateness. By thus relating the domestic situation to the public situation, the theme of insularity is established.

In chapter 3, which follows chapter 2 chronologically, the juxtaposition of the private and the public is maintained. Again, the chapter opens with a situation in the outer world and ends with a domestic scene, thus strengthening the reader's impression of the recurrent theme. At the opening of the chapter, the anarchists have assembled at Verloc's house. Their physical appearance and gestures suggest obesity, which is the cause of their laziness. But even if they were not fat and idle, they would not be able to work together for a common goal; they are individuals, each insulated from the other in fanatic devotion to his point of view. Thus, when Michaelis, the ex-convict, expresses his view of history in grandiloquent terms, Karl Yundt "giggled grimly"(30), rejecting the speaker's "pessimism." Undaunted by Yundt's giggle, Michaelis "talked to himself, indifferent to the sympathy or hostility of his hearers, indifferent indeed to their presence. . . ." (31) But his lecture is interrupted once again: "a harsh laugh from Comrade Ossipon cut the tirade dead short in a sudden faltering of the tongue and a bewildered unsteadiness of the apostle's mildly exalted eyes" (32). Although both Yundt and Ossipon display an abhorrence of Michaelis' idea of history, they do not agree on what Ossipon regards as Stevie's degeneracy. His notion is based on the theory of Lombroso: "If you read Lombroso---" Yundt retorts, "Lombroso is an ass" (33). Ossipon can only issue his rejoinder, "You don't understand" (34). These characters cannot communicate, reach out to one another, although they ostensibly belong to the same community, just as Verloc and his wife cannot do the same, as my examination of the bedroom scene in this chapter has already shown. The demented Stevie's circles are, therefore, a telling comment on the characters' moral situations:

> Stevie, seated very good and quiet at a deal table, drawing circles, circles; innumerable circles, concentric, eccentric; a coruscating whirl of circles that by their tangled multitude of repeated curves, uniformity of form, and confusion of intersecting lines suggested a mad art attempting the inconceivable. (32)

Ordinarily, circles signify wholeness and integrity, but, as drawn by Stevie, they represent the characters' emptiness and lack of harmony. They suggest that every character in the novel is imprisoned in the circle of his own self, cut off from the rest of his or her society by self-interest, preoccupations and ideas.

Conrad now disrupts the chronological sequence to extend the implications of his theme of insularity. If he were to maintain sequence, he would have to describe, after chapter 3, Winnie's mother's leaving for an almshouse, Mr. Verloc's growing sense of hopelessness about using the quarreling anarchists to plant the bomb, and the growth of intimacy between Verloc and Stevie, before describing the effect of the outrage on Ossipon and the Professor, who talk, at Silenus' restaurant, about a man's having been "blown up in Greenwich Park this morning" (50), signifying a passage of some time between the anarchists' meeting and the scene at the restaurant. Such chronicling of events would create harmony and narrative flow at variance with the sense of fragmentation, chaos, and discord that characterizes relationships in the world of the novel, and would indicate that Conrad was using the conventional method of narrating a detective story. However, his intention was not merely to suggest, through his structure, that in the discordant world of The Secret Agent even time and space are in chaos, but, more importantly, to reiterate the universal nature of human insularity and its fatal consequences. He does so by delineating the figure of the Professor and, then, moving his focus from anarchists to the police, and finally, returning it to the Verlocs as we move back to the novel's present.

With the portrait of the Professor, Conrad further emphasizes the fact that isolation from community is a condition of life among the anarchists. Because the Red Committee recommends its members show restraint, the

Professor cannot identify with it and cultivates his own idea of anarchy which is absolutely lawless and self-seeking:

> Of humble origin, and with an appearance really so mean as to stand in the way of his considerable natural abilities, his imagination had been fired by the tales of men rising from the depths of poverty to positions of authority and affluence. The extreme and almost ascetic purity of his thought, combined with an astounding ignorance of worldly conditions, had set before him a goal of power and prestige, to be attained without the medium of arts, graces, tact, wealth--by sheer weight of merit alone. On that view he considered himself entitled to widespread success. His father, a delicate dark enthusiast with a sloping forehead, had been an itinerant and rousing preacher of some obscure Christian sect--a man supremely confident in the privileges of his righteousness. In the son, individualist by temperament, once the science of colleges had replaced thoroughly the faith of the conventicles, this moral attitude translated itself into a frenzied puritanism of ambition. He nursed it as something secularly holy. To see it thwarted opened his eyes to the true nature of the world, whose morality was artificial, corrupt, and blasphemous. The way of even the most justifiable

> revolution is prepared by personal impulses disguised into creeds. The Professor's indignation found in itself a final cause that absorbed him from the sin of turning to destruction. (58)

The Professor's individualism commits him to the destruction of society because it has, he thinks, treated him unfairly by not assisting him to fulfill his narrow ambition. His anti-social impulse is strongly evident in his readiness to give explosives "with both hands to every man, woman, or fool" (51) in order to fulfill his goal of the elimination of humanity.

It is not surprising, therefore, that a man like the Professor must live insulated from others, unable to relate to them or their situations. At the opening of chapter four, when Ossipon confronts the Professor with the remark, "You're the man who would know the inside of this confounded affair," the latter replies,

> "In principle what one of us may or may not know as to any given fact can't be a matter of inquiry to the others"(49)

In rejecting the need for communicating on a given subject, the Professor questions the collaborative effort which underlies human society. An individualist, the Professor is unable to feel for others; it becomes particularly clear when he dismisses the news of a man's having been blown up with the statement: "what happens to us as individuals is not of the least consequence"(52).

Conrad further emphasizes the solitariness of individuals through the police officers. Chief Inspector Heat and his immediate superior, the Assistant Commissioner, engage, after Stevie's destruction, in a verbal game, which reveals how each acts individually, self-directed. When Heat discovers among Stevie's remains the small piece of cloth with Verloc's address on it, he decides to keep the piece of evidence to himself. To do otherwise would be to run the risk of disclosing and losing his source of information about anarchists, Adolf Verloc. In his meeting with his chief, therefore, Heat attempts to prove that Michaelis is responsible for the bomb outrage; ironically, the ex-convict is protected by a great lady, who is an influential friend of the Assistant Commissioner's wife. Therefore, Heat's superior needs to protect Michaelis as much as Heat needs to save Verloc. When the two police officers discuss the bomb outrage, each man tries to serve his self-interest. When Heat tells his chief that Michaelis could be connected with the bombing, the Assistant Commissioner initiates the following conversation:

> "You connect Michaelis with this affair?"
>
> Chief Inspector Heat was very positive, but cautious.
>
> "Well, sir," he said, "we have enough to go upon. A man like that has no business to be at large, anyhow."
>
> "You will want some conclusive evidence," came the

> observation in murmur.
>
> "There will be no difficulty in getting up sufficient evidence against him."
>
> . . .
>
> "Yes," said the Assistant Commissioner; "I have. I do not mean to say that you have not thought of Michaelis at all. But you are giving the fact you've mentioned a prominence which strikes me as not quite candid, Inspector Heat. If that is really the track of your discovery, why haven't you followed it up at once, either personally or by sending one of your men to the village?"
>
> "Do you think, sir, I have failed in my duty there?" (82-84)

Heat and his chief are working radically at cross-purposes, and no common ground of agreement between them is possible. This interview, like the domestic scenes, the scenes dealing with Vladimir and the anarchists, emphasizes the insularity of human beings in the world of *The Secret Agent*.

Through his presentation of insularity, Conrad issues the warning that it can lead not only to mere breakup of a marriage, as in the case of the Herveys in "The Return," but to fatal consequences. Conrad said in a letter to R. B. Cunnighame Graham that his "technical intention" in *The Secret Agent* was the sustained "ironic treatment of a melodramatic subject."[44] Indeed, there is a good deal of melodrama in the novel: the destruction of Stevie, the murder of Verloc, and Winnie's suicide. Conrad describes and delineates the Verlocs' relationship, the division between governments, and that between anarchists, to emphasize the ironic descrepancy between what should be and what really is and shows how the lack of community between the members of different groups and between individuals produces a destructive outcome. Because one nation cannot trust another, it must order a man like Verloc to carry out a bomb outrage, in the hope that it will go towards the suppression of anarchism, and because Verloc cannot use the differing and quarreling anarchists for the task, he must get his brother-in-law to plant the bomb. And because the Professor's solipsistic hatred of society leads him to give explosives to Verloc, as he would to any other man bent upon violence, Verloc can attempt to carry out the bomb outrage.

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[44] *Joseph Conrad's Letters to R. B. Cunnighame Graham*, ed. Cedric Watts (Cambridge: UP, 1969) 169.

While external causes make the use of Stevie necessary, internal causes make the use possible. Both Winnie and her mother act in ignorance of each other's intentions, and keeping Verloc in the dark as to their motives, encourage intimacy between Stevie and his brother-in-law. Thus, Stevie becomes dependent on Verloc and the latter secretly uses the former to place the bomb, without foreseeing what form Winnie's grief would take if any harm came to the boy. The consequence of each character's acting in seclusion, without the knowledge of the other's motives, can only be grimly ironic.

Conrad uses the time-shift technique to achieve the ironical effect. In Chapter 4, he violates the chronological sequence, as already pointed out, with the news of the bombing. By the time the reader returns to the present time in Chapter 8, which opens with Winnie's mother's preparing to move into an almshouse, he is painfully aware of the ironic consequences of such an act. The reader now knows, as Baines rightly suggests, that the "fair-haired fellow" who blew up was Stevie.[47] Conrad tells at length of Winnie's mother's secret efforts to secure her a room so that she can sever her ties with Stevie, making him dependent on Verloc, as son on father, because Conrad wants to emphasize that she is a solitary individual who cannot take others into confidence. When the reader, with the awareness of Stevie's destruction, listens to the mother's story, he understands the folly of insularity, of isolated human behaviour. She does not know her son-in-law well, yet she thrusts her son on Verloc, giving Verloc the opportuniy to lead Stevie to his death.

Winnie's efforts to earn security for Stevie are equally ironic:

> Before his extended arm could put down the hat Stevie pounced upon it, and bore it off reverently into the kitchen....
>
> "You could do anything with that boy, Adolf," Mrs. Verloc said with, with her best air of inflexible

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[47] Baines, 332.

> calmness.
>
> He would go through fire for you. He-------"
>
> . . .
>
> "I wish you would take that boy out with you, Adolf." (133-134)

Since the reader already knows what has happened to Stevie, Winnie's struggle to win Verloc's affection for her brother seems terribly ironic and the folly of insulation from one's life partner becomes clear. Winnie has never understood her husband's motives nor tried to find out the nature of his work. Thus, when she encourages the growing bond between Verloc and Stevie, she remains in the dark as to what her husband is thinking or to what end he could use Stevie. As a result, her solipsistic concern for her brother's welfare becomes the cause of his death.

Not only the wife's alienation from the state of her husband's feelings, but also the husband's solipsism produces disaster. Removed from Winnie emotionally, Verloc can make use of Stevie, and once the accident has taken place, and the reader has switched back to the present, the secret agent can try to console her with his "Do be reasonable, Winnie"(170), and attempt to help her put her grief behind her:

> "Come here," he said in a peculiar tone, which might have been the tone of brutality,
>
> but was intimately known to Mrs. Verloc as the note of wooing.

She started forward at once ...(190)

Since Verloc never understood that Stevie's welfare was the reason for Winnie's marrying him, and never endeavoured to find out how intensely she loved her brother, he can be so callous and obtuse in this scene, and in his ignorance receives his wife's fatal blow.

What we have seen so far confirms that Conrad in The Secret Agent re-examines "The Return"'s theme of insularity. While in the short story he treats this theme by using complementary narrative segments cumulatively and linearly, in the novel he universalizes the theme by means of complex chronology and its violation. In the long work, the novelist presents a number of characters, who suggest aspects of the theme, and their interrelationships, to reinforce his vision of solitariness.

In its emphasis on human beings' incapacity for understanding and collaboration, the novel offers a bleak picture of modern society. It is not surprising, therefore, that the characters of the novel, like those of "The Return," live in London:

> In front of the great doorway a dismal row of newspaper sellers standing clear of the pavement dealt out their wares from the gutter. It was a raw, gloomy day of the early spring, and the grimy sky, the mud of the streets, the rags of the dirty men harmonized excellently with the eruption of the damp, rubbishy sheets of paper soiled with the

> printers' ink. The posters, maculated with filth, garnished like tapestry the sweep of the curbstone. (57)

Specifically, the London of the novel, like that of "The Return," symbolizes human insularity. The Assistant Commissioner looks out of the window of his house to confront a city "choked in raw fog" (72). Comrade Ossipon deserts Winnie and leaves her to her death and takes a walk back to London when he finds the city "slumbering monstrously on a carpet of mud under a veil of raw mist" (218). Fog imagery, used frequently in the novel, suggests human beings' incapacity to see clearly others in their needs. After she has stabbed Verloc to death, Winnie falls back upon Ossipon, expecting him to help her escape to a place where she will not be tried for the murder. But Ossipon cannot sympathize with her; he leaves her to her death and returns to the city with her money. His vision of London as an engulfing fog is symbolic of his own and general incapacity of people to understand other humans, come close to them in sympathy.

Like the fog, the street on which the Verlocs' house is located, symbolises the insularity of life in the great metropolis. In the "solitude" of Brett Street,

> ... all sounds of life seemed lost as if in a triangular well of asphalt and bricks, of blind houses and unfeeling stones. (201)

The city street becomes the apt image for the characters of the novel, isolated, uncomprehending, and unsympathetic.

Of course, Conrad's characters are not always private individuals, unable to relate to other men in society, and to escape their sef-made prison. He is also committed to the task of depicting the centrifugality of his characters, who move out of their private self towards the larger society of human beings. As I show in the next chapter, Jim develops in this way, and one reason why he does is that his immediate predecessor, Karain, remains throughout a private individual. In writing *Lord Jim*, Conrad offered a social counterpart to the story.

III. 'Karain' and *Lord Jim*

During the time he worked on *Lord Jim*, Conrad also wrote "Youth" and "Heart of Darkness."[48] The almost concurrent composition of these works is likely to lead the reader to believe that they deserve detailed comparison. Conrad's comment on these works seems to suggest the reader is right: "The three tales, each inspired by a similar moral idea (or is it only one of my optical delusions?) will make in that sense a homogeneous book."[49] While concurrent composition alone could not make the works' comparison inevitable, the presence, in them, of a strikingly "similar moral idea" could. The phrase, "optical delusions," however, suggests Conrad's own uncertainty that "a similar moral idea" may not operate in all three works. In "Youth," Marlow idealizes egoistic youth's vigour, its ability to surmount obstacles, while Marlow in the novel exposes, through his account of young Jim's desertion of his endangered ship and eight hundred passengers, the failure and immorality of the dream of the heroics of youth. The principal moral idea in "Heart of Darkness" is that every man has potential for evil, and Marlow focuses on this theme by illustrating various forms of moral failures, not only those of Kurtz, but also those of the other Europeans, who figure so prominently in the first two parts. *Lord Jim*, on the other hand, concerns the moral issue of how the individual's betrayal of others leads him to find his place in the web of humanity.

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[48] Frederick R. Karl in his *A Reader's Guide to Joseph Conrad* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1979) 131, suggests that Conrad completed "Youth" by September 1898 and "Heart of Darkness" by April 1899.

[49] Quoted in Ian Watt, *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1979) 268-69.

In its central moral concern, the novel is different from the other two tales, and, there is no special reason to compare them on grounds of similar moral idea. It is very likely that Conrad wrote *Lord Jim* to provide a moral alternative to his vision in the immediately preceding "Karain": in the story the betrayer of human trust suffers from a destructive sense of isolation, finds in illusion the means to survive, but does not achieve community with other humans; in the novel the hero, guilty of the same offence, experiences terrible isolation, finds through illusion a new inspiration to live but makes his life meaningful as he integrates himself into human society.

In the story, Karain and his close friend Matara undertake a punitive search for the latter's sister and her Dutch lover. The Dutch planter runs off with Matara's sister, who had been engaged to marry a Malay. Karain and his friend form a group in order to avenge not only Matara's own disgrace but also that of the Malay people who are "dismayed" at the abduction of the woman by the Dutchman but are unable to punish him because "the Dutch ships [are] near . . . 'If he dies now [their] land will pay for his blood'."[56] During the long odyssey of revenge, Karain becomes, in his dreams, enamored of Matara's sister, and he shoots Matara to death as the latter raises his knife to kill his sister when she and her lover are found. Thus, Karain betrays his group and people, for he dishonours the trust put in him by his friend and fails in his duty to bring to justice those who violated the honour of his community. Karain's treacherous act saves the woman's life, but days afterwards he experiences guilt, symbolised by the terrifying appearance of Matara's ghost, which produces in him a destructive sense of isolation. However, Karain survives as he believes in the illusion that the ancient seer, whom he happens to meet, has the power to protect him. Soon afterwards, he conquers a kingdom, becomes its successful ruler, and immerses himself in the illusion of success; the illusion of success also keeps his guilt from becoming unmanageable, and thus sustains him.[51] After the old man dies, Karain is overcome by desolation and guilt, and he is vulnerable to suicide or madness. An English sailor persuades Karain that the Jubilee sixpence stamped with the image of Queen Victoria that he is giving him, will protect him against Matara's ghost. Karain believes in the object's imaginary power, and once again, his illusion keeps away guilt.

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[56] *Tales of Unrest* 30. Further references to the story are to this edition and will appear in parentheses in the text.

In a certain sense, *Lord Jim* repeats the story of betrayal, guilt, and its suppression. Jim, the chief mate of the pilgrim ship *Patna* wants to perform heroic deeds to satisfy his ego. His high-flying dreams of heroism blind him to the importance of other people so that when his ship appears to be sinking, partly fear and partly the thought of his own safety force him to jump, leaving eight hundred pilgrims to drown. Jim thus betrays an imperilled humanity, the pilgrims who trusted him with their lives. Following his desertion of the _Patna_ and the pilgrims, Jim feels guilt (a sense of failure to stay on board and rescue the passengers and an awareness of betrayal of human beings), which isolates him from other humans. Jim's guilt harasses him. Especially when his soiled past turns up, his guilt forces him to give up his job and seek sanctuary miles away. If Jim continued to run from his sordid reality, he would not, as in Eggstrom's words, find the earth "big enough to hold his caper" (196), and would, presumably, seek self-destruction. If Jim is to live peacefully, he must find the means to alleviate the harassing unrest of spirit. The silver ring, which Jim receives from Stein, rekindles Jim's illusion of heroism in a remote Patusan. Once illusion has suppressed his guilt, Jim arrives in Patusan, undertakes successful military expeditions and becomes the virtual ruler of the island. His governing success also provides him with a new inspiration and meaning for his life.

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[51] The opening of the story, the narrative present (years after Karain's crime), shows how Karain's belief in the illusions of the sorcerer's protection and his governing enterprise enables him to survive.

Each work deals with a man who betrays, suffers from tormenting consciousness, and becomes isolated; he finds illusion which suppresses and cures his unrest. The similarities between "Karain" and _Lord Jim_ are, however, not only conceptual but also technical. The predicament of the individual in each work is delineated by an involved first-person narrator who, unlike the narrator of The Nigger of the 'Narcissus', does not speak in Conrad's voice. In "Karain" Conrad for the first time employs an "I"-Narrator who is not a direct projection of the author and who is very close to the Marlow of Lord Jim. Both Marlow's and "Karain"'s narrator's primary task is to reconstruct from memory the stories of Jim and Karain respectively. In their principal roles as tellers of stories of other people's lives, these narrators are different from the Marlows of "Youth" and "Heart of Darkness." In "Youth" Marlow tells his own story. And one is not sure whether in "Heart of Darkness" one reads Marlow's own story or that of Kurtz.[52] We do not encounter such uncertainties of focus in "Karain" and Lord Jim, since the tellers of these works clearly occupy a less important position than the main characters.

We should note, however, that Conrad employs similar narrators and situations to achieve different goals, to delineate his individual and social perspectives, in the story and the novel respectively. In the story, Conrad stresses his character's separateness, his isolation and personal survival, whereas in the novel the author shows that his isolated character not merely survives, but lives, as he should, to fulfill his duty towards other people. The narrow vision in the immediately preceding "Karain" may have prompted Conrad to emphasize in the novel his character's merger into society, to present his story as one of the relation of man to the human communion.

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[52] This is why Wayne C. Booth wonders whether the novella is best seen as "the story of Kurtz or the story of Marlow's experience of Kurtz." He asks: "Was Marlow invented as a rhetorical device for heightening the meaning of Kurtz's moral collapse, or was Kurtz invented to provide Marlow with the core of his experience of the Congo?" See Booth's The Rhetoric of Fiction (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 1961) 346.

In what follows, I discuss how in each work the narrator manages his narration to present Conrad's vision. In "Karain," the narrator does not begin with the conflict--the revival of Karain's guilt with the death of the old sorcerer--and speed the reader through to the resolution. Instead, he takes more than the first seventeen pages (the introductory section) to remember the pre-crisis Karain who, before his retainer's death, rules confidently and relatively peacefully. Then, he belatedly introduces the conflict but shifts his focus to Karain's past, retells Karain's story of murder, guilt and its cure (the flashback). The story soon returns to the conflict point and slowly proceeds towards the resolution. The narrator presents the opening movement, the flashback, and the resolution cumulatively to focus on Karain's isolation and personal survival, and he uses the coda to reiterate his impression of the native's situation.

The opening immediately arouses the reader's interest because it introduces him to a curiously apprehensive Malay, Karain. Years before, he committed a murder, became isolated, and experienced the first torment of fear. He now has the confidence, respect and devotion of a people, but he is isolated from them, alone with his fear of Matara's ghost. When he is surrounded by his armed chiefs, and busy dispensing justice to his people, this public figure is, ironically, insulated from them emotionally; he is caught in his private plight:

> He would lean forward and appear to listen as for a far-off note of discord, as if expecting to hear some faint voice, the sound of light footsteps; or he would start half up in his seat, as though he had been familiarly touched on the shoulder. (16)

As the narrator later remarks, Karain is engaged in "a struggle against a thought, an idea, against something that cannot be grappled, that never rests--a shadow, a nothing, unconquerable and immortal, that preys upon life" (23).

Karain puts up a "front" as a ruler as he remains absorbed in his individual situation:

> It was the stage where, dressed splendidly for his part, he strutted, incomparably dignified, made important by the power he had to awaken an absurd expectation of something heroic going to take place--a burst of action or song--upon the vibrating tone of a wonderful sunshine. He was ornate and disturbing for one could not imagine what depth of horrible void such an elaborate front could be worthy to hide. His smallest acts were prepared and unexpected, his speeches grave, his sentences

ominous like hints and complicated arabesques. (6)

The Malay is not a genuine ruler who honestly performs his communal role, but an actor who, in his isolation, devotes himself to rigorous performance each day of his life to satisfy his own needs. We should note that Karain's land is "shaped like a young moon" (4), and surrounded by the small "semicircle hill"; he himself is surrounded by the "fringe of a red umbrella." These circle images suggest that he is shut up in the circle or prison of his private predicament, isolated from his people by his unrest which he must hide by rituals of the stage.

"Karain" is not a story in which the hero proceeds from a state of isolation to community. Given Karain's betrayal of his friend and people, his life would be meaningful if he could develop fellowship with his people and symbolically undo the original treachery. Conrad's concern in the story, however, is not such positive development of his character; rather, it is to show that Karain remains cut off from his people and, in this state, survives through belief in illusion. Conrad continually stresses his belief in the saving power of certain illusions. For instance, he writes in Victory: "Every age is fed on illusion lest man should renounce life early and the human race come to an end."[53] A younger Marlow refrains from telling the Intended about Kurtz's moral degeneration because he must not ruin "that great and saving illusion that shone with an unearthly glow in the darkness."[34] In "Karain," too, illusion is supportive and saving:

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[53] Joseph Conrad, Victory (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963) 89. Subsequent references to the novel are to this edition and will appear in parentheses in the text.

> Even during the most important interviews, Karain would often give a start, and interrupting his discourse, would sweep his arm back with a sudden movement, to feel whether the old fellow was there. The old fellow, impenetrable and weary, was always there . . . and impassive behind his master's agitation . . . murmured above his head in soothing tone some words. (12)

The Karain of the present survives because he believes in the old retainer's power to defend him against the thereatening spirit of his dead friend. The old man's "soothing" words are not in themselves powerful, but Karain believes them to be so. Thus he believes in an illusion which sustains him like his illusion of unavoidable success. Karain, who led the Bugis to the conquest of the bay and to the founding of their kingdom, is so preoccupied with his achievements that his unrest cannot surface in a destructive form. Yet, success is illusory because it is ultimately inadequate to free Karain from his mental anguish, for when the old sorcerer dies Karain's pomp and authority cannot protect him from the fear of Matara's ghost. Nonetheless, for a while, at least, illusion of success keeps his guilt at bay and gives him a sense of peace and safety.

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[34] Heart of Darkness, ed. Leonard F. Dean (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice Hall, 1965) 64.

When, with the old sorcerer's death, Karain's isolation and fear become destructive, the narrator takes the reader back to an earlier time in the protagonist's life as he retells Karain's own story (the flashback). The narrator does so because thus far he has kept the reader curious as to what Karain had done in his earlier life to cause his present unrest and he must maintain the reader's interest by relating what Karain told him about his past. More importantly, Conrad's narrator manipulates the flashback to maintain and increase focus on the private nature of Karain's suffering and survival through the belief in illusion.

The flashback not only shows how Karain's odyssey of revenge alienates him physically from his land and people, but also suggests that the consequence of the betrayal of a trusted friend is to become isolated from one's kind. He loses his friend's company and cannot return to his own people after the disgraceful act, just as Jim cannot face his family following the desertion. Ironically, even the woman whom he saves from death is not there to alleviate his impending loneliness, for she simply looks at him, and says aloud, "No! I never saw him before" (39). Karain soon begins to hallucinate Matara who says, "You are my friend, kill with a sure shot" (41). Karain is possessed with a ghost, a fear that isolates him emotionally from his kind, and he becomes very conscious of his having to bear his plight alone: "I ran--I ran crying like a child left alone and far from the house" (41). If the flashback reinforces and increases the reader's awareness of Karain's fear which isolates him, it also creates, through an account of Karain's meeting with the seer, a stronger impression of the isolated character's clinging to illusion in order to survive. What prevents Karain from disintegration and suicide is the old man's imaginary power to make him feel safe.

The scene which resolves Karain's crisis creates most emphatically the sense of Karain's survival as a private being. Upon the sorcerer's death Karain, as in the immediate aftermath of Matara's murder, confronts the ghost of his dead friend, is very lonely and fearful, and once again he seeks to retreat behind some comforting power. Karain so desires to survive that he wants the white sailors to give him passage to the West. The narrator perceives that Karain's request is selfish and tells the Malay: "You must abide with your people. They need you" (43). Although the jocular Hollis dismisses this with his "You won't soothe him with your platitudes" (44), the perspicacious narrator puts his finger on the true moral situation. He has already noticed Karain as an actor in the midst of a devoted people, a private figure, masquerading as a public hero. Now, he realizes again that Karain is just an individual, although he belongs to his own community by virtue of background and language. This individual needs an illusion, a cure for his unrest because he "had been hunted by his thought along the very limit of human endurance" (45). Therefore, the narrator joins Hollis in asking Karain to believe in the power of Hollis' talisman.[illegible] As Karain does, he immerses himself in the illusion of safety, steps into "the splendour of his stage, to wrap himself in the illusion of unavoidable success" (52), and thus he survives, without learning to relate to other people. As the quotation suggests, he will be living out his life posing as the ruler, but carrying on in his isolation his private struggle, keeping guilt at bay by the talisman, a stop-gap measure.

The coda completes Conrad's portrayal of Karain's survival. The importance of the final section can hardly be exaggerated. In a letter to William Blackwood, Conrad wrote:

> In the light of the final incident, the whole story in all its . . . descriptive detail shall fall into its place--acquire its value and significance. This is my method based on deliberate conviction. . . . I beg to instance "Karain". . .[illegible]

The final incident in "Karain" involves the narrator's

[illegible] Lawrence Graver points out that Conrad rightly suggested that there is something magazinish about "Karain": "Conrad begins to tell a serious tale of murder and remorse, but deliberately takes the edge off by using a slick, humorous ending to evade the full complexities of his theme. Hollis' 'magic' coin is a Jubilee sixpence minted in 1888 to celebrate Victoria's fifty years as sovereign, and at times Conrad seems to be catering to a stock patriotic response: 'She commands a spirit . . . .' Since 'Karain' was written only four months before the celebration of Victoria's *sixtieth* jubilee in mid-June 1897, perhaps Conrad had hoped to capitalize on the sentiment. . . . 'Karain' was the first story he sold to *Blackwood*'s, which must have been attracted by the royal high-jinks and topicality." See, Graver, 33.

[illegible] *Heart of Darkness*, 128.

meeting with Jackson, one of his former shipmates, years after the events narrated in the story. When Jackson recalls Karain's story and wonders whether the Malay's experience was real, the narrator points to the frenetic life around them in the Strand: "Only look at all this." Jackson examines the bustling traffic and says:

> "Yes; I see it," . . . "It is there; it pants, it runs, it rolls; it is strong and alive; it would smash you if you didn't look out; but I will be hanged if it is as real to me as . . . as the other thing . . . say, Karain's story. (55)

The narrator is, of course, correct when he concludes that Jackson "had been too long away from home." So long that to him the might of the British empire, symbolised by the six pence (trade and commerce), the displaying guns at the shop window, and the bustling traffic, seem less meaningful than Karain's illusion. The narrator's point, however, is that both are meaningful: Karain's personal survival through faith in illusion is as real as the white men's faith in their empire's power, which, too, is an illusion because her power is evanescent. Yet, a belief in her might gives the Englishmen the impetus to engage themselves in such colonial activities as arms trade (we will remember that the narrator and his colleagues dealt in arms in Karain's country). In their endeavours, they, like Karain, are sustained by their illusion. The coda thus suggests that a belief in illusion is supportive. This belief maintains Karain, who, of course, remains detached from his people.

As it should be clear by now, suffering in isolation does not produce in Karain moral awareness or capacity for community. If he were to advance morally, he would probably come to understand the seriousness of his betrayal of others or gain enough moral depth to feel identity with them, in order, so to speak, to atone for his offence. The text suggests the possibility of such moral growth, although Karain never achieves it. Following his betrayal of his friend and people, Karain seems to possess an opportunity for growth:

> I remember walking upon a broad path under a clear starlight; and that strange country seemed so big, the ricefields so vast, that, as I looked around, my head swam with the fear of space. Then, I saw a forest. . . . I turned off the path and entered the forest, which was very sombre and very sad." (39)

"Such an enlargement of spatial . . . perspective," Paul Bruss rightly suggests, "usually entails for . . . the Marlows of 'Youth' and 'Heart of Darkness' . . . a maturation of vision or profound self-realization."[87] Neither Karain's spatial nightmare nor his journey in the wilderness results in moral understanding of his betrayal of others. Karain's hearing of the whisper of Matara's ghost only implies that he is dimly aware of committing an offence against his friend for which the spirit is haunting him. He cannot, however, clearly see the wrongness and immorality of his deed and does not realize that he failed in his duty to his people.

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[87] Paul Bruss, *Conrad's Early Sea Fiction: The Novelist as Navigator* (Lewisburg: Bucknell UP, 1979) 49.

"Karain: A Memory" is, then, not about a man's moral perceptiveness, and about his moral advance, but about his survival. To show how the individual lives following his crime is also a major objective of Lord Jim. Marlow's narrative is a means to this end. As Marlow remembers Jim "at length, in detail and audibly" (34), the reader becomes involved in Jim's history, for Marlow talks directly to the group of dinner companions of whom the reader is a member (Chs. 5-35) and, then, much more directly to the reader who, along with the privileged man, becomes an audience of one (Chs. 36 to the end). Marlow's telling places the reader in the position of an auditor, interested in the subject matter and method of the teller. As he listens to Marlow, the reader develops an interest in Jim's betrayal, isolation, inner suffering, and more important, in the way he lives.

Marlow responds to the reader's curiosity as he describes the effect of Jim's jump from the Patna. Jim, who could not relate to other people, namely, the officers of the Patna, becomes more isolated following his betrayal of trust. He feels cut off from his family in his belief that they will not forgive his act. Speaking of his father he says, "'He has seen it all in the home papers by this time,' . . . 'I can never face the poor old chap.' . . . 'I could never explain'" (79). We may also recall the omniscient narrator's comment on Jim's moral desolation:

> His mind positively flew round and round the serried circle of facts that had surged up all about him to cut him off from the rest of mankind." (31)

Jim, like Karain, is, then, imprisoned in the circle of his plight.

Like Karain's act of treachery, Jim's betrayal produces a ghost. Throughout his conversation with Jim in the crucial chapters, 7 to 17, Marlow refers to Jim as being "haunted," as someone "in a dispute with an invisible personality, an antagonistic and inseparable partner of his existence--another possessor of his soul" (93). This tormenting ghost isolates Jim from his kind.

Marlow's important task in the novel is to explain how Jim lives in the face of his agonizing consciousness. He tells the reader that he finds Jim a job at a rice mill, which helps Jim to "carry on [for a time] . . . the serious business of life" (184), but his job at the mill and his later jobs as water clerks cannot cause his "wounded spirit to die quietly of inanition" (185), cannot exorcise his guilt, his harrowing sense of failure to fulfill his dreams of heroism . Therefore, when the fact of the desertion threatens to become a topic of public discussion where he holds a job, he abandons his prospects and goes away. Jim's running away is an example of his emotional isolation from other people. Although he is genuinely fond of Denver and Egstrom, he cannot bring himself to believe that they could forgive his offence if they came to learn about it. Jim is incapable of hoping for other people's understanding because he is cut off from them.

Marlow realizes that what Jim needs to live free of inner torment is an illusion. Like the story's narrator, Marlow cannot provide the hero with illusion and Marlow must seek the help of a manipulator of illusions. Commenting on this, Bruce Johnson says:

> Despite his efforts in Jim's behalf, [Marlow] can never offer the talismanic gesture (within the power of Stein) which will seem to Jim to be a real "opportunity." He and Jim are simply not vibrating on the same frequency.
>
> In truth, the narrator of "Karain" and Marlow must continually separate illusion from "reality" because they are afraid of the consequences of not doing so. They cannot, even for a moment, play the game engaged in by Stein or Hollis--cannot, that is, therapeutically manipulate illusion.[58]

It would be more accurate to say that while both narrators do not manipulate illusion, they regard it as the staple of life. The narrator of "Karain" must participate in Hollis' charade because he can thus prevent the Malay from destruction, and Marlow must take Jim to Stein so that Stein offers Jim a new illusion, a new dream, which will rehabilitate the drifter.

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[58] Bruce Johnson, "Conrad's 'Karain' and *Lord Jim*," in Thomas Moser, ed., *Lord Jim* (New York: Norton, 1960) 469-70.

When Stein gives Jim the silver ring to present to Doramin, the ring will, it seems from Marlow's account, earn him the friendship of Doramin, with whose help he will achieve greatnes in politically unstable, conflict-torn Patusan:

> The ring! The ring! Where the devil! Ah! Here it was . . . . Jove! Wouldn't do to lose the thing. He meditated gravely over his fist. . . . Would hang the bally affair round his neck. And he proceeded to do this immediately, producing a string . . . for the purpose. . . . 'I've been waiting for that. I'll show yet . . . I'll . . . I'm ready for any confounded thing. . . . I've been dreaming of it. . . Jove! This is luck at last. . . You wait. I'll. . ." (234-35).

The ring rekindles Jim's illusion. He has always had the dream of becoming a successful fairy-tale hero but failed to act to this end when he deserted the Patna. The ring now, once again, promises such heroism. The power of his renewed belief in illusion has an instantaneous effect, for as soon as Jim receives the ring from Stein, his guilt (not only his sense of failure but also his awareness of betrayal), like Karain's following his receipt of the sixpence, leaves him.'' Jim regains mental peace, and, once in Patusan,

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''Bruce Johnson rightly suggests, "The potency of both charms derives from the weight of human intention behind them. . . . Both Karain and Jim sally forth like a pair of Italian peasants, with slightly absurd (shoestring, piece of blue ribbon--it is all the same) yet potent charms hanging around their necks. . ." (468-69).

demonstrates his zeal to live by immersing himself in the success of military expedition and governing enterprise.

But Conrad wanted Jim to be significantly different from Karain, nonetheless. Jim should not merely survive, like Karain, but learn to live morally and meaningfully: he should fulfill his duty towards other people. Therefore, while Jim in Patusan engages himself in conquest and governing enterprise to chase the illusion of personal glory, he learns to employ them and his other actions in the service of the larger society of Patusan. Thus he reverses the earlier pattern of his life, both before, during, and after the betrayal, a pattern of detachment from others.

Before taking this further, I would like to suggest that because Conrad wanted his character to develop in these terms, he made Marlow's narrative task more complex than that of the narrator of "Karain." Marlow, like the story's narrator, shows a man's capacity to survive, but he has the added task of explaining for his curious readers/listeners why his character must not merely survive but gain a social identity. Therefore, Conrad varies the plot structure of the novel from that of the story and uses multiple perspectives as opposed to the story's single perspective. The story has a relatively linear action, with only one flashback which does not violate the reader's sense of a temporal order. But the novel radically reshuffles and interrupts narrative chronology, allowing Marlow to shift perspectives, to use other characters' opinions and situations before, during, and after his conversation with Jim about the Patna incident. The examples and commentaries of various people and the conversation enable the reader to discover the full significance of Jim's truth, so he can meaningfully follow the less winding and admittedly less complex narrative in the second half of the novel. The shifts in time and point of view analyse Jim's moral situation and indicate his moral need to achieve community with other humans, while a relatively linear narrative illustrates his moral growth, his capacity for communion.

An omniscient narrator opens the novel in medias res, after Jim has the Patna incident and Marlow's attempts at his rehabilitation behind him. Then, the narrator goes back in time, working over Jim's past, moving from his boyhood to the desertion to the Court of Inquiry (leaving out the circumstances of the desertion, however). Marlow soon takes over the narrative task and without telling the reader/listener what happened on board the Patna or at the court, back-tracks long enough to explain his interest in the Patna and her officers, and goes off on a digression about the Chief Engineer. Marlow disrupts chronology and presents the Engineer's case because he wants the reader to see--before Jim begins to narrate his own story of his jump--that Jim is a complex character: while he evokes sympathy, he is nonetheless an offender against human trust and solidarity.

Marlow begins by telling the reader that on his way to the court he encountered the Patna's officers and chief mate. While he did not bother about the morally revolting officers, he was immediately struck by the appearance of the chiefmate:

> He looked as unconcerned and unapproachable as only the young can look. There he stood, clean-limbed, clean-faced, firm on his feet, as promising a boy as the sun ever shone on. . . . He had no business to look so sound. I thought to myself--well, if that sort can go wrong like that . . . . (40)

Jim appears so full of promise, innocence, so honourable that Marlow is impressed; Jim's youth reminds Marlow of his own high-minded idealistic youth (51). Yet, Jim is very disturbing, for with him all men are on trial; all men are capable of committing what Jim did, no man is really trustworthy. Jim's appearance and the sense of human vulnerability that his jump implies will always encourage Marlow to take a sympathetic view of Jim's case, but he cannot condone Jim's offence:

> He looked as genuine as a new sovereign, but there was some infernal alloy in his metal. . . . (45-46)

To emphasize the nature of Jim's crime, Marlow continues his digression and presents the Engineer's case. When Marlow visits the Engineer at the hospital before attending the Court of Inquiry for the first time, he watches the man suffer from a vision of pink toads:

> 'Millions of pink toads. There's no eyes like mine. Millions of pink toads. It's worse than seeing a ship sink. . . .' 'The ship was full of them, you know, and we had to clear out on the strict Q.T.,' 'All pink! All pink!-as big as mastiffs, with an eye on the top of the head and claws all round their ugly mouths. Ough! Ough!' Quick jerks as of galvanic shocks disclosed under the flat coverlet the meagre and agitated legs; he let go my shoulder and reached after something in the air . . . The spectral horror in him broke through his glassy gaze. (52-53)

The toads are commonly seen as symbol of the eight hundred pilgrims multiplied in delirium. The Engineer's demented mind shows that he cannot shut out from his subconscious the terrifying awareness of having betrayed the passengers. The Engineer was willing to abandon the Patna and her passengers, but now even this unscrupulous man cannot forget his crime because his crime is enormous. The Chief Engineer's case affords a moral perspective: his crime is enormous and he suffers deservedly. This enables the reader to see that Jim's crime too is huge and needs to be put under strict moral scrutiny. Although Jim was unwilling to desert his ship and the pilgrims, he, too, has participated in his colleague's serious crime.

Marlow's impression of Jim suggests that Jim deserves sympathy, although he is an offender, while the Engineer's perspective indicates the seriousness of Jim's offence.

After the Engineer episode, the narrative does not go back to the time of the collision on the Patna and explain the circumstances of the betrayal. Instead, Marlow moves forward in time to a week after the Inquiry to talk about Captain Brierley, who "had never in his life made a mistake . . . [had never known] indecision, much less . . . self-mistrust" (57). Brierley committed suicide soon after the Inquiry because he admitted to himself that in a test similar to Jim's he too might have failed. The Brierley episode emphasizes human vulnerability and evokes sympathy for Jim.

By disrupting chronology Marlow uses different perspectives--his own, the Engineer's, Captain Brierley's--so that he can analyse Jim's moral situation: while Jim's act calls for a harsh judgment, Jim deserves sympathetic understanding. Yet the significant fact about Marlow's analysis of Jim throughout the first half of the novel is its continual emphasis on Jim's crime, which, coupled with Jim's desire to undo his moral failure, implies that Jim's moral necessity is to achieve rapproachment with human society.

Marlow's conversation with Jim and his use of the perspectives of the French Lieutenant and Bob Stanton, among others, accentuate the sympathetic Jim's offence. Brierley episode, the narrative moves back in time to the days of the Inquiry and further back to the time of the collision on the Patna as Marlow and Jim begin to talk about the jump. While the Brierley episode has emphasized the need for a sympathetic understanding of Jim, Marlow's conversation with Jim emphasizes the seriousness of his offence. While Jim's narration of his crime reveals his perspective as to the jump at an earlier time, Marlow's comment on Jim's story reveals his own point of view in the narrative present. The interaction of the two perspectives throws light on Jim's offence:

> "So the bulkhead held out after all" . . . . "Yes it held." And suddenly he [Jim] lifted his head; he sat up; he slapped his thigh. 'Ah!' What a chance missed! My God! What a chance missed!" . . . He had no leisure to regret what he had lost, he was so wholly and naturally concerned for what he had failed to obtain. (83)

While Jim's comment implies his moral limitations, Marlow's analysis strengthens the reader's impression of such limitations. Jim's concern is with the glory he might have had had he stuck to the ship, whereas he should be afflicted by the sense of having betrayed the pilgrims and having dishonoured the seaman's code of service, as Marlow suggests.

The following conversation between Jim and Marlow also shows Marlow's attempt to keep the focus on Jim's crime:

> "I had felt the ship move . . . . The cloud had raced ahead, and this first swell seemed to travel upon a sea of lead. . . . What would you have done? You are so sure of yourself--aren't you? What would

> you do if you felt now--this minute--the house here move, just move a little under your chair. Leap! By heavens! You would take one spring from where you sit and land in that clump of bushes yonder.' "He flung his arm out at the night beyond the stone balustrade. I held my peace. He looked at me very steadily, very severe. There could be no mistake: I was being bullied now, and it behoved me to make no sign lest by a gesture or a word I should be drawn into a fatal admission about myself which would have had some bearing on the case. I was not disposed to take any risk of that sort. Don't forget I had him before me, and really he was too much like one of us not to be dangerous. But if you want to know I don't mind telling you that I did, with a rapid glance, estimate the distance to the mass of denser blackness in the middle of the grass-plot before the verandah. He exaggerated. I would have landed short by several feet--and that's the only thing of which I am certain. (106-7)

Jim's question to Marlow, "What would you have done?" implies his extenuating rationalisation that another man would have done what he did under the circumstances. But Marlow knows that while another sailor might have jumped, to admit that would be to condone Jim's crime. Jim is a seaman, "one of us," and Marlow, a sea captain, cannot overlook his betrayal of eight hundred pilgrims. In fact, Marlow himself could not commit an offence as serious as Jim's because Marlow, like his namesake in "Heart of Darkness," has the moral strength to withstand the degenerating influence of darkness. In the earlier tale, Kurtz "had stepped over the edge [into an abyss of moral darkness]," while Marlow "had been permitted to draw back [his] hesitating foot."[illegible] Although we all stand, in Conrad's view, on the threshold of the abyss, we should try to prevent ourselves from stumbling over. Marlow does not use the abyss imagery in the novel, but he associates, as does the Marlow of the novella, immorality or moral collapse with an embracing of darkness. Even if he deviated from his code of conduct, the novel's narrator would land short of the mass of denser blackness, to which Jim succumbs when he jumps.

All through his conversation with Marlow, Jim tries to bring Marlow on to his side, to make him take a lenient view of his jump. While Marlow sympathizes with Jim, he is aware of the subtle unsoundness of the man. Marlow's sympathy is evident when, at the beginning of Chapter Eleven, he says:

> He was a youngster of the sort you like to see about you; of the sort you like to imagine yourself to have been; of the sort whose appearance claims the fellowship of these illusions you had thought gone out, extinct, cold, and which, as if rekindled at the approach of another flame, give a flutter deep, deep down somewhere, give a flutter of light . . .

[illegible] Heart of Darkness, 59.

of heat!

But Marlow cannot forget the offence Jim has committed. Thus when Jim rationalizes that there was not a "hair's breadth" of difference between jumping off the *Patna* at the time he did and deserting the ship he would have been forced to do when she sank, Marlow comments "a little viciously": "It is difficult to see a hair at midnight . . . And so you cleared out at once" (131).

Marlow maintains focus on the seriousness of Jim's offence with two important digressions, among others, namely, the episodes concerning the French Lieutenant and Bob Stanton. He recalls his meeting, at a much later date than when he holds his conversation with Jim, with a French Lieutenant whose perspective provides the most damning criticism of Jim's jump. The Frenchman was on board the ship that rescued the *Patna* and towed it into port. He tells Marlow how for thirty hours he stood on the *Patna*'s bridge while she, threatening to go under, was towed. Not only does his fearless devotion to the rescue of an imperilled humanity condemn Jim's failure of responsibility, but also his mention of the fact that it finally took only twenty-five minutes to unload the pilgrims from the *Patna*. This reminds us that Jim stood still for twenty-seven minutes on that fatal night. And so when Marlow seeks "professional opinion" on Jim's case from this "genie endowed with strange powers of insight,"[11] he receives the simple verdict, "And so that poor young man ran away along with the others" (145). When Marlow invites the Lieutenant to take a lenient view of Jim's case, he is confronted by the Frenchman's "sharp glance . . . like a razor-edge on a battle-axe," the stare of an executioner who proceeds to slaughter Jim:

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[11] C. B. Cox, *Joseph Conrad:The Modern Imagination* (London: Dent, 1979) 34.

> I contend that one may get on knowing very well that one's courage does not come of itself . . . . There's nothing much in that to get upset about. One truth the more ought not to make life impossible. . . . But the honour--the honour, monsieur! . . . The honour . . . that is real--that is! And what life may be worth when . . . 'when honour is gone . . . I can offer no opinion--because--monsieur--I know nothing of it.' (148)

The Frenchman is fully aware that we all suffer from funk; what is required, however, is to control our cowardice by devoting ourselves fully to duty. The French Lieutenant is a spokesman for all those officers who control their fear in the service of their ship and passengers.

Marlow then digresses further, on the story of Bob Stanton. Like Jim, Bob was a chief mate involved in a shipwreck, but one lady's maid refused to leave. Unlike Jim, Bob drowned himself in trying to save the maid. A seaman does not desert a sinking ship while there are passengers on board. Bob gives his life to save one life whereas Jim saves his own life, leaving eight hundred passengers to drown.

By violating narrative chronology, Marlow uses different perspectives, places different characters in relation to Jim, so that he can emphasize the need for a sympathetic understanding of the young chief mate, while at the same time stressing the gravity of his offence. While Marlow in his capacity as "histor"[62] listens to the opinions of other characters, he also learns more and more about Jim and gradually begins to take a more critical view of Jim's betrayal. The effect of the perspectives of the French Lieutenant and Bob Stanton on Jim, for example, is that Marlow now can unequivocally judge that Jim has committed "a breach of faith with the community of mankind" (157). The reader learns this throughout the first half through the perspectives of various characters and in different forms, and it implies to him that Jim's moral regeneration must involve a reentry into the community of mankind. When the reader hears, therefore, that Jim wants to "come upon some sort of chance to get it all back again" (179), that he wants to regain the glory he would have had had he not jumped but come to the rescue of the passengers, the reader is convinced that what Jim really needs to do, given his betrayal of humanity, is to achieve rapproachment with human society and thus symbolically undo the treachery to the pilgrims and reverse the earlier pattern of his life marked by detachment from others.[63] As J. I. M. Stewart points out,

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[62] Robert Scholes and Robert Kellog, The Nature of Narrative (London: Oxford UP, 1966) 263.

[63] As Leo Gurko comments, "In his [Jim's] experiences on the training ship and later as a young mate he always kept to

> Jim has not lost a position, a prestige, that he can get back--like an athletic record, or a boy's place at the top of his form. He has done something that is in effect treason to his kind. Marlow sees this as the simple fact on the record. [Jim's] egoism in his romantic dream . . . has made his treason possible. Rehabilitation will be meaningful for him only if it is concomitant with a radically changed relationship to other people.[44]

In Patusan, however, Jim makes his rehabilitation meaningful. Marlow's narrative in the second half of the novel shows that Jim, having received an illusion like *Karain*, does not really immerse himself, like his predecessor, in the illusion of success, but learns to commit himself to other humans.

Marlow's narrative technique in the second half of the novel is not as digressive and circuitous as in the *Patna* section. In the first part, the narrative focus tended to centre our attention on Marlow's discussions with Jim and the narrator's efforts to place the other characters in

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[43] (cont'd) himself, nourished his high-flying dreams of heroism, thought of himself as above everybody else, was responsive only to the claims of his own nature. . . . Before, during, and after the trial Jim remains a 'loner,' as detached from the white men and their private codes in the Pacific, as he is from his father the vicar who mouths his untested platitudes back home in the safety of rural England. The eye of others in this instance had no effect upon Jim because he is blind to its existence." See Leo Gurko, *Joseph Conrad: Giant in Exile* (New York: Macmillan, 1962) 108.

[44] J. I. M. Stewart, *Joseph Conrad*(New York: Dodd, 1968) 111-12.

relation to the hero so that we understood the full significance of his situation. After we have learned what Jim needs to do in order to make his rehabilitation meaningful, Conrad reduces the complexity of the narrative. The narrative still uses unchronological time but, as Ian Watt points out, the violations of chronology "do not materially change the narrative's temporal and spatial focus."[65] We now read somewhat uninterruptedly about Jim's actions and form an impression of his moral advance, which becomes the highlight of the narrative. As we progressively hear from Marlow about Jim's arrival in Patusan and his involvement in local politics, our attention is focused on Jim's meaningful rehabilitation.

Marlow's account of Jim's own story of his finding himself hip-deep in a mud-bank during his escape from Rajah Allang's prison upon his arrival in Patusan suggests Jim's positive development:

> It seemed to him he was burying himself alive, and then he struck out madly, scattering the mud with his fists. It fell on his head, on his face, over his eyes, into his mouth. . . . He made efforts, efforts that seemed to burst his eyeballs in their sockets and make him blind, and culminating into one mighty supreme effort in the darkness to crack the earth asunder, to throw it off his limbs--and he felt himself creeping feebly up the bank. He lay

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[65] Watt, *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century*, 309.

> full length on the firm ground and saw the light, the sky. Then as a sort of happy thought the notion came to him that he would go to sleep. He will have it that he _did_ actually go to sleep . . . and then he arose muddy from head to foot . . . . (254)

Jim has jumped again, not over a ship's rail but over a stockade and found himself in the mud of the river. Jim's immersion into the mud suggests his imminent integration into the land. His initial attempt to free himself from mud indicates his unwillingness to accept integration, but his dozing off to sleep and waking symbolize both the death of his former existence and the birth of his new life in the midst of a people. Significantly, soon afterwards, he is "received . . . into the heart of the community" (258); he finds a father, a mother, a devoted friend, and a wife, in Doramin, the chieftain's wife, Dain Warris, and Jewel respectively. His life has now a social texture and his activities take on a social character.

Marlow reports, relying on personal observation during his visit to Patusan and information from Jim, Jim's involvement in Patusan politics, which enables him to serve an indigenous people:

> When he arrived the Bugis community was in a most critical position. 'They were all afraid,' he said to me--'each man afraid for himself; while I could see as plain as possible that they must do something at once, if they did not want to go under one after

> another, what between the Rajah and the vagabond Sherif.' But to see that was nothing. When he got his idea he had to drive it into reluctant minds.... He had to devise the means . . . and his task was only half done. He had to inspire with his own confidence a lot of people . . . he had to conciliate imbecile jealousies, and argue away all sorts of senseless mistrust. (261)

Jim is capable of manipulating the emotions, pacifying the fears and jealousies of the Patusanians, inspiring the political consciousness of a divided state. He has become a public hero, not in the heart of civilization, but in a remote Malay district. It is immaterial to wonder whether Jim would have been able to achieve heroic status in the public world of civilization.[44] What is material is to appreciate that Jim has learnt to relate himself to others, to act dutifully for the Patusanians.

Marlow describes how in his new environment a sense of duty motivates all Jim's actions. Jim now uses his power, obtained from the defeat of Sherif Ali, for the benefit of his people, whose welfare is his responsibility since he is the virtual ruler of the land. For example, he liberates the slaves held by Ali and puts pressure on the Rajah for relief of the local peasantry. He protects such groups as the coastal fishing villages from the Rajah's exertions, and he abolishes the Rajah's system of slavery. One may view these and Jim's other actions as egoistic, as Marlow does: "he seemed to love the land with a fierce egoism." But even though Jim's actions may satisfy his ego, neither Marlow nor we can deny that they also affirm his responsibility for his people, for "there was a high seriousness in his stammerings" (248). He carries out his responsibility because he feels a sense of identity and community with his people.

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[44] As does Michael P. Jones in Conrad's Heroism: A Paradise Lost (Ann Arbor: UMI, 1985) 95.

Crucial to our understanding of this is Marlow's presentation of the Gentleman Brown episode. With the coming of Brown to Patusan, Jim confronts a situation remarkably similar to that on the Patna, where he was responsible for the lives of hundreds of people. Now, as ruler of his community he is responsible for his people, and his effectiveness as a social being will depend in a large measure on whether he succeeds in doing what is expected of him under the circumstances. Avrom Fleishman suggests that Jim fails in his duty to his people by his decision to let Brown run away:

> Jim creates his own community in Patusan; his jump takes him 'into the heart of the community.' . . . It is this that gives him 'the impenetrable armour of resolution' he had lacked. But he fails to make a total identification with the community, with the result that his resolution breaks down. When Brown appeals to him on grounds of their common moral failings and status as outcasts, Jim places Brown,

> who is to him the image of his own prior self, above his group ties. With this decision he is cast back into his hollow selfhood, and is sundered from his social group.[67]

That Fleishman is wrong is not difficult to see once we devote to the Brown episode the close analysis that it warrants.

When Brown and his villainous crew of pirates arrive in Patusan, they are able to gain a foothold because Jim is away, and when he returns he is faced with the decision to give Brown "a clear road or else a clear fight" (388). Jim allows the pirates to escape, without foreseeing the disaster his decision will bring upon Patusan and himself: before he escapes, Brown opens fire on the Bugis, killing Dain Darris, Doramin's son, and his men, and later Doramin shoots Jim to death to avenge his son's death. Marlow's account of Jim's encounter with Brown might suggest that Jim's surfaced guilt, and his unconscious identification with Brown, are reasons why Jim fails to deal with Brown properly and allows him to escape and thus incurs the disaster. When Jim confronts Brown, the latter asks, "what made you [come to Patusan]?," a question which makes Jim's guilt obvious, for Jim "stared at this" (380) and "got very red in the face" (381).

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[67] Avrom Fleishman, *Conrad's Politics: Community and Anarchy in the Fiction of Joseph Conrad* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1967) 110.

Brown causes Jim more pain when he unwittingly refers to Jim's jump from his ship and one of its reasons, fear:

> "This is as good a jumping off place for me as another. I am sick of my infernal luck. But it would be too easy. There are my men in the same boat--and, by God, I am not the sort to jump out of trouble and leave them in a d--d lurch," I said. . . . "I've lived--and so did you though you talk as if you were one of those people that should have wings so as to go about without touching the dirty earth. Well--it is dirty. I haven't got any wings. I am here because I was afraid once in my life. Want to know what of? I won't ask you what scared you into this infernal hole. . . ." (382-83)

Brown's comments remind Jim of the _Patna_ incident; he jumped off the ship, partly, because of fear. Jim begins to see that he is no different from Brown, for fear brought them where they are, and, in his past, he acted, like Brown, from the belief that "when 'it came to saving one's life' . . . one didn't care who else went--three, thirty, three hundred people" (386). Jim's awareness of his guilt may have strengthened his wish to spare Brown's life, and, similarly, his unconscious identification with Brown may have caused him to think that Brown deserves a second chance. But the real reason for his decision to let Brown go is, Marlow wants his reader to see, Jim's sense of duty towards his people, his eagerness to ensure the welfare of his people.

When Jim confronts Brown, Jim is faced with a decision to choose a course of action that best serves the interest of his people. He knows that the invaders have already inflicted six casualties on the village. A fight would certainly destroy more lives and property, as Marlow's report of Brown's threat to Jim suggests:

> You don't want us to come down here perhaps--do you? You are two hundred to one. You don't want us to come down into the open. Ah! I promise we shall give you some sport before you've done. You talk about me making a cowardly set upon unoffending people. What's that to me that they are unoffending when I am starving for next to no offence. But I am not a coward. Don't you be one. Bring them along or, by the fiend, we shall yet manage to send half of your unoffending village to heaven with us in smoke!" (382)

Marlow seems to suggest that under the circumstances Jim rightly decides to let Brown escape, for Marlow reiterates Jim's claim that he is "responsible for every life in the land" (394). Moreover, by letting Brown escape Jim acts in accordance with the wishes of his people:

> In the town many hoped that the rapacious strangers would be induced . . . to go away. It would be good if they went away [without a battle]. (390)

Jim's sense of duty towards and community with his people is reiterated through Marlow's presentation of Jim's reaction to the situation which grows out of the massacre of Dain Warris and his men. Following the disaster Marlow interprets Jim's situation:

> "What thoughts passed through his head--what memories? Who can tell? Everything was gone, and he who had been once unfaithful to his trust had lost again all men's confidence. . . . People had trusted him with their lives-only for that; and yet they could never, as he had said, never be made to understand him." (409)

The situation is now very ironic, for Jim's act of duty and solidarity has resulted in the loss of people's trust in him, has come to be seen, though unjustly, as betrayal like his real breach of faith with the community of mankind he committed when he jumped off the Patna. What can Jim do in a situation like this? Should he listen to Jewel, who pleads with him to escape from Patusan and the wrath of Doramin? But Jim cannot do that because his life would not be worth having if he fled; as Ian Watt suggests, "escape might be a repetition of Patna."[44] Jim presumably realizes he may not be able to regain people's trust, but he can perform an act by which he can suggest that he has always been worthy of their trust. Therefore, he must go to Doramin, fully aware that the chieftain may take his life for the murder of his son. It is an irony of fate that Jim must ignore the claims of his beloved in order to fulfill his higher obligation to society, and in so doing must meet his death. Jim acts in response to the demands of his ego, but his ego-fulfilment is inevitably linked with his social role. In satisfying his ego, Jim reaffirms his responsibility towards and community with his people, and suggests that he is a true social being and very deserving of people's trust. Marlow draws attention to this aspect of Jim's sacrifice when he recalls Jim's promise to his people: "He was ready to answer with his life for any harm that should come to them if the white men . . . were allowed to retire" (392).

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[44] Watt, Conrad in the Nineteenth Century, 345.

It is in the light of Jim's fulfilment of his role as a social being that we can best understand Marlow's last monologue, which has caused critics often to condemn Jim:

> But we can see him, as an obscure conqueror of fame, tearing himself away from the arms of a jealous love at the call of his exalted egoism. He goes away from a living woman to celebrate his pitiless wedding with a shadowy ideal of conduct. Is he satisfied--quite, now, I wonder? We ought to know. He is one of us--and have I not stood up once, like an evoked ghost, to answer for his eternal constancy? (416)

Douglas L. Mensforth comments on this passage thus:

> . . . the 'shadowy ideal of conduct' which causes the living woman, Jewel, to enter into that 'soundless, inert life' which is a kind of death of the spirit. Marlow says that it is the cause of his

> exalted egoism that tore Jim from Jewel's jealous love. In this Jim represents that divisive spirit in man that is to be shunned and guarded against.''

Mensforth disregards the fact that Jim cannot flee Patusan with Jewel because, as already suggested, for Jim to escape would mean to betray the people of Patusan, to disgrace himself; he could not make Jewel a part of his life dihonour. It is as if in confirmation of this Marlow had said: "There are the girls we love, the men we look up to, the tenderness, the friendships, the opportunities, the pleasures! But the fact remains that you must touch your reward with clean hands, lest it turn to dead leaves, to thorns, in your grasp" (222). If Jim fled, he could not touch Jewel "with clean hands." In order to avoid betrayal, but to reassert his identifcation with the community he must go to them. Jim sacrifices himself in response to his "egoism," but his egoism is "exalted," firmly grounded in accepted moral standards which encourage a ruler's fulfilment of his duty to his social unit.

When Marlow refers to Jim's final act as "pitiless wedding with a shadowy ideal of conduct," he is remembering Jewel's impression (in Chapter 37) of Jim's lack of feeling for the real, flesh and blood human being but commitment to an abstract and unclear ideal of social behaviour. But Jim's ideal of conduct (which is perfectly clear to Jim himself) is worthy of praise; it confirms his "eternal constancy" and

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''Douglas L. Mensforth, Lord Jim (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1970) 91.

Marlow's belief that Jim "had achieved greatness" (225). Marlow does not doubt the social significance of Jim's act, despite the nagging implications of his rhetoric that things could have been different, that destiny could have spared Jim of his flamboyant sacrifice, that Jim might have hoped for a different ending to his life, that Jim might have wanted to accomplish more than he had done in his lifetime. Such speculations are only to be expected when the sacrifice of a life is at issue, but they do not blur the moral and communal significance of the act of renunciation. As Fleishman points out, Jim's death is "an act of identification with the higher claims of the community: 'there is to my mind a sort of prfound and terrifying logic in it,' writes Marlow (342). If we are to find the axiom of this logic it must lie in the philosophy of the organic state."[78]

In Patusan Jim makes his life meaningful as he fulfills his duty and asserts his fellowship with people and thus gains their trust. When he loses trust, he reasserts community with them by sacrificing his life, thereby demonstrating that he is very worthy of trust. This is Jim's way of fulfilling himself, of suggesting that an individual must live in solidarity with the larger society of human beings and try to win its trust at whatever cost to himself, of recognising the primacy of the social unit.

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[78] Fleishman, 110.

A comparative examination of "Karain" and Lord Jim reveals, then, Conrad's dual attitude to the individual. In the short story, he portrays the plight of an individual whose inner torment isolates him from people and forces him to resort to the saving power of illusion. Karain remains at the end an isolated individual because his deliverance from suffering has meaning only for himself; it enables him to survive but not to relate to others. The novel also deals with a character whose guilt initially keeps him apart from others. While he, too, finds illusion sustaining, he goes on to fulfill himself through fellowship with a larger society of human beings. Jim's story is thus the story of "the relation of man to the human communion." What prompted Conrad to treat Jim's positive development is, it seems, his narrow vision of Karain's survival.

Conrad presents his limited vision in the short story by skillfully using complementary narrative segments. A larger perspective of the individual's gradual development to a social identity requires Conrad to use dislocated chronology and multiple perspectives. With these methods, he stresses the character's need for and achievement of a social self.

IV. 'The Secret Sharer' and Under Western Eyes

When final work on Under Western Eyes became exasperating, Conrad set aside the novel and decided to write a short story. The idea for what he would write came first in a letter from Captain Marris, who for twenty years had lived in the East; in his letter Marris hoped Conrad would "give some more tales of the East." When, at the end of September 1909, Marris visited Conrad at Aldington, the latter made up his mind about the kind of stories he should write. In his letter of October 1909, to Pinker, Conrad wrote about Marris' visit:

> It was like the raising of a lot of dead--dead to me--because most of them live out there and even read my books and wonder who the devil has been around taking notes. My visitor told me that Joshua Lingard made the guess: 'It must have been the fellow who was mate in the Vidar with Craig.' That's me right enough. And the best of it is that all of these men of 22 years ago feel kindly to the chronicler of their lives and adventures. They shall have some more of the stories they like.[1]

Marris' letter and visit inspired Conrad to write, in two weeks, "The Secret Sharer," a tale about sailors, ship, and the sea, before returning to the unfinished novel.

Although "The Secret Sharer" is set at sea and is about a captain, its main interest is in matters central to Under

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[1] Life and Letters, II, 130.

Western Eyes. The short time Conrad took to write the story suggests that he had a clear conception of the story's material when he began work on it. In fact, a good deal of the material came from the unfinished novel, a fact borne out by the similarities between the two works. In both works a young murderer seeks refuge with another lonely young man of his profession and appeals to him for a compassionate understanding of the extenuating circumstances that, he claims, are responsible for his crime. In Under Western Eyes a young student murderer, Haldin, appeals to another young student, Razumov, for sanctuary and urges him to try to understand that he murdered M. de P. only to advance the revolution against the autocratic Russian regime. Similarly, in "The Secret Sharer," young Leggatt, a seaman, makes a plea to the captain-narrator for protection and wants the captain to recognise that the crewman on the Sephora forced him to commit murder.

In addition, both works treat the theme of identity. In "The Secret Sharer," the captain acknowledges his identity with Leggatt by repeatedly describing the fugitive as "my secret self," "my double," "my other self," my "secret sharer," phrases which derive from the unfinished novel; after meeting with the revolutionaries, Razumov

> felt bizarre as it may seem, as though another self, an independent sharer of his mind, had been able to view his whole person very distinctly. (230)

To treat the theme of identity in the novel, Conrad presents

Razumov and Haldin as spiritual brothers. They are alike: just as Haldin murders M. de P., Razumov murders Haldin; Razumov's suffering at the hands of the revolutionists resembles Haldin's torture at the hands of the Russian police before his execution.

It would be worthwhile to consider at this point Conrad's conception of Razumov and to suggest how he might have arrived at the idea of the character of the captain. Razumov is an isloated figure since he has no family or recognizable social connections, and he is alienated from his social environment by his ambition of academic distinction. When Haldin asks Razumov to help him escape punishment for his murder, Razumov cannot do so and betrays Haldin to the authorites because he is afraid that the autocratic regime would retaliate by persecuting him and destroying his dream of academic success. Despite his betrayal of Haldin, Razumov cannot get rid of him, however. Ironically, Razumov becomes identified with the dead man who lives in the guise of his sister, mother, and friends. It is this association which ultimately regenerates him, helps him to grow morally. When Conrad wrote the story he created a less complex character, a simplified version of Razumov. His new character is also isolated from his society, the ship, but unlike Razumov, when appealed to for help by the murderer, he honours the request and identifies with the outlaw and develops psychologically as a result. The focus of the two works is on the hero's identity with the assassin, and its positive effect.

We should note, however, while the isolated captain's identity with Leggatt helps him to become whole and integrated as an individual, Razumov's identity enables him to find, through suffering, a social self. The story ends optimistically with the image of youth winning out, which perhaps provided Conrad with the imaginative strength necessary to complete the unfinished novel.

The captain, as the narrator of his tale, has a free hand, so to speak, in delineating experience; he presents it at length and entirely from his own perspective, revealing consistently his sense of isolation which leads him to identify with Leggatt and thus fulfill his emotional needs. The narrator begins his tale with a description of the tropical landscape which he reviews while standing alone on his deck "at the threshold of a long passage":

> On my right hand there were lines of fishing-stakes resembling a mysterious system of half-submerged bamboo fences, incomprehensible in its division of the domain of tropical fishes, and crazy of aspect as if abandoned for ever by some nomad tribe of fishermen now gone to the other end of the ocean; for there was no sign of human habitation as far as the eye could reach. . . .[72]

This close attention to natural objects indicates the depth of the narrator's alienation from his crew; he is lost in this barren landscape. His feeling of isolation is also conveyed by such phrases as "no sign of human habitation," "the barren islets." Metaphors such as "a mysterious system," "incomprehensible," "crazy of aspect" reveal his uncertainty and anxiety over a Conradian test of his mettle, and a feeling that he will be found wanting. Not only is his feeling that he is new to the ship but also his psychic condition keeps him apart from his society, the ship and its crew.

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[72] Cedric Watts, ed. Typhoon and Other Tales (London: Oxford UP, 1986) 244, 243. Subsequent references to the story are to this edition and will appear in parentheses in the text.

In his emotional detachment from the crew and the tradition of seamanship, he acts like a private individual, defies convention, and out of kindness, keeps anchor watch: "For the last two days the crew had had plenty of hard work, and the night before they had very little sleep" (247); and, when Leggatt arrives, he further reveals his compassion. Before Leggatt even begins to describe how he killed a man, the captain excuses the fugitive:

> "Aha! Something wrong?"
>
> Yes. Very wrong indeed. I have killed a man."
>
> "What do you mean? Just now?"
>
> No, on the passage. . . . when I say a man--"
>
> "Fit of temper," I suggested confidently. (253)

This is the response of an isolated individual, not that of a true captain whose solidarity with the crew and allegiance to law would have compelled him to banish Leggatt, if not to surrender him to the police.

However, because he is isolated from his crew he believes that the only right thing to do is to disregard Leggatt's murder and its moral implications; in retelling Leggatt's own story of the killing he wants the reader to do the same:

> "It happened while we were setting a reefed foresail, at dusk. Reefed foresail! You understand the sort of weather. The only sail we had left to keep the ship running; so you may guess what it had been like for days. Anxious sort of job, that. He gave me some of his cursed insolence at the sheet. I tell you I was overdone with this terrific weather that seemed to have no end to it. Terrific, I tell you--and a deep ship. I believe the fellow himself was crazed with funk. It was no time for gentlemanly reproof, so I turned round and felled him like an ox. He up and at me. We closed just as an awful sea made for the ship. All hands saw it coming and took to the rigging, but I had him by the throat, and went on shaking him like a rat, the men above us yelling, 'Look out! look out! look out!" Then a crash as if the sky had fallen on my head. They say for over ten minutes hardly anything was to be seen of the ship--just the three masts and a bit of the forecastle head and the poop all awash driving along in a smother of foam. It was a miracle that they found us, jammed together behind the forebits. It's

> clear that I meant business, because I was holding him by the throat still when they picked us up. He was black in the face. It was too much for them. It seems they rushed us aft together gripped as we were, screaming 'Murder! like a lot of lunatics, and broke into the cuddy." (254-55)

Leggatt's statement that the murder took place during the setting of the reefed foresail indicates his belief that the victim was disrupting action necessary to save the ship. However, from Leggatt's later account, it appears that the foresail did get set despite his having to engage himself in a fight with the man. This indicates that the victim's disruption was not of so drastic a nature to endanger lives on board the ship and that Leggatt's claim that he had to commit murder to save many lives is just a convenient excuse. But even before he has heard Leggat's story the captain has decided that Leggatt is innocent. In the passage that precedes Leggatt's account, the narrator without any evidence suggests that Legatt's killing of the man was a necessity: "And I knew well enough the pestiferous danger of such a character where there are no means of legal repression" (254). Thus the captain explains away Leggatt's crime and in effect lends support to Leggatt's hateful conviction that the victim was one of those "Miserable devils who have no business to live at all" (253). As Mark Troy suggests, the captain is "not really concerened with the moral or legal aspects of the case, or even Leggatt's own reasoning : his concern is the fabric he subjectively weaves."[13]

While impulsive sympathy prompts the captain initially to pardon Leggatt's crime and take him on board, he soon finds in the man an ally just as Jim finds in Marlow an ally following the desertion of the *Patna*. He identifies with Leggatt emotionally to lessen the burden of his loneliness. Moreover, instinctively he is drawn to the man's self-confidence, courage and strength. From the very moment the two men meet, the captain is struck by Leggatt's "calm and resolute voice," his "strong soul" (251), and he intuits he needs Leggatt's manly qualities to become an integrated personality, to free himself from uncertainty and anxiety, to be true to "that ideal conception of one's own personality every man sets up for himself secretly" (246).

Therefore, he repeatedly asserts his imaginary identity with Leggatt. In a discussion of the story, Marvin Mudrick lists more than a dozen examples of the captain's feeling of identity with the fugitive to argue that the reader understands the suggestion of the double early in the story and that subsequent insistence on the conception of duality is unnecessary:

> Here are some phrases of the captain's, taken at random from the story, describing Leggatt: "like my double", "My sleeping suit was just right for his

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[13] Mark Troy, "'. . . of no particular siginficance except to Myself': Narrative Posture in Conrad's 'The Secret Sharer'," *Studia Neophilologia* 56 (1984) 44.

> size", "as though I had been faced by my own reflection in the depths of a sombre and immense mirror", "murmured my double", (all these on a single page); "as though I were myself in that other sleeping suit"; "My double"; "we, the two strangers in the ship, faced each other in identical attitudes"; "he must have looked exactly as I used to look in that bed"; "I felt dual more than ever"; "the dual working of my mind"; "I was constantly watching myself, my secret self"; "Anybody would have taken him for me" . . . . by the time we have given our energy to relating such coarse, obvious and superabundant clues . . . we have lost interest and faith in the narrative itself.[14]

Mudrick, however, fails to see that the repetitive double imagery serves to illustrate the captain's obsessive need, in his isolation, for identity:

> And I told him a little bit about myself. I had been appointed to take charge while I least expected anything of the sort, not quite a fortnight ago. I didn't know the ship or the people. Hadn't had the time in part to look about me or size anybody up ... For the rest, I was almost as much of a stranger on board as himself, I said. (223)

It is as if to assure himself that he is not alone, that he has a sharer, a young ally whom he can emulate, he keeps repeating his sense of identity.

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[14] Marvin Mudrick, "Conrad and the Terms of Modern Criticism," in Bruce Harkness ed. Conrad's "The Secret Sharer" and the Critics (Belmont, Calif: Wadsworth, 1962) 114.

Even though his imaginary identification with Leggatt disrupts the ship's social order, the captain downplays its significance, and thus suggests his allegiance to the double. We notice in the concluding segment of Part 1 increased difficulty of communication between the captain and the crew. The morning after he takes Leggatt on board, the captain realizes the uneasiness between himself and the crew:

> The steward reappeared suddenly in the doorway. I jumped up from the couch so quickly that he gave a start.
>
> "What do you want here?"
>
> "Close your port, sir." But he did not move from the doorway and returned my stare in an extraordinary, equivocal manner for a time. Then his eyes wavered, all his expression changed, and in a voice unusually gentle, almost coaxingly:
>
> "May I come in to take the empty cup away, sir?"
>
> "Of course!" I turned my back on him while he popped in and out. Then I unhooked and closed the door and even pushed the bolt. This sort of thing could not go on very long. (264)

The captain's unusual behaviour--his jump, stare, reddening, etc.--indicates more than his fear of Leggatt's being discovered in his cabin; he behaves unusually because he feels if Leggatt was found he would lose his psychological ally. Soon afterwards, he comes down for breakfast, sits at the table, and

> "eating nothing [himself he] presides[s] with such frigid dignity that the two mates [are] only glad to escape from the cabin as soon as decency permit[s] . . . . (266)

However, despite his knowledge that his sheltering Leggatt has widened the schism between him and the crew, he overlooks its significance. Rather, he sees the crew's reaction to his behaviour as a sign of their hostility towards him, which he had detected from the beginning, a hostility suggested by the mate's smile and whiskers (265). He seems to suggest that the outside world is conspiring against him and his double. Such feeling derives from allegiance to Leggatt.

The opening of Part 2 emphasizes the captain's loyalty to his imaginary double. This section opens with Captain Archbold's visit to the young captain's ship. The narrator's presentation of his professional counterpart's attitude to Leggatt's case affirms his psychological bond with the fugitive:

> "You were very anxious to give up your mate to the shore people, I believe?"
>
> He was. To the law. His obscure tenacity on that point had in it something incomprehensible and

> a little awful; something as it were, mystical, quite apart from his anxiety that he should not be suspected of "countenancing any doings of that sort." Seven and thirty virtuous years at sea, of which over twenty of immaculate command, and the last fifteen in the Sephora, seemed to have laid him under some pitiless obligation. (270-71)

By piling up adjectives, "obscure," "incomprehensible," "awful," and "mystical," the narrator indicates his inability to see Leggatt as a criminal. More importantly, he is unable to appreciate the older captain's sincere conviction that Leggatt deserves to be surrendered to legal authorities. While Archbold failed in his duty to give orders during the Sephora crisis and deserves criticism for that, his obligation to the law does not. Nonetheless, the narrator makes clear that Leggatt is beyond the law and thus shows his loyalty to the outlaw.

Indeed, "The Secret Sharer" dramatizes the triumph of the captain's identity, which is shown particularly in the concluding section of the story. The middle section of Part 2 concentrates on the captain's growing awareness of the difficulties in keeping Leggatt concealed and the necessity to maroon him. Leggattt himself wishes to be jettisoned. The captain, therefore, says goodbye to his double; his manner of bidding farewell is at once an affirmation of his identity with Leggatt and a demonstration of his having become a complete personality.

In the final scene, the captain brings his ship dangerously close into the shadow of the Kohring so that Leggatt can swim to the shore. He does this against the wishes of his crew, who steal "glances at [him] from below for signs of lunacy or drunkenness" (287). There is no apparent reason for the captain to endanger many lives on board for the sake of one life. (Paradoxically, in defence of his murder, he had earlier claimed that the responsibility of a ship's officer is to protect lives on board his ship). Moreover, by not taking this risk he would not have been putting Leggatt's life at risk, given that Leggatt can swim long distances. The captain's individualistic behaviour only serves to widen the gap between him and the crew:

> "She will never get out. You have done it sir. I knew it'd end like this. She will never weather, and you are too close now to stay. She'll drift ashore before she's round. Oh! my God!"
> "I caught his arm as he was raising it to batter his poor devoted head, and shook it violently.
> She's ashore already," he wailed, trying to tear himself away. (292-93)

The captain here resembles Leggatt on the Sephora who had to control a mutinous crew member. The chiefmate disrupts the movement of the ship, but the captain's act was, in the first place, unnecessary. It is as if to explain away the irrationality of his behaviour the captain insists on

Leggatt's help in saving the ship, and thus indicates the justification for his act:

> Was she moving? What I needed was something easily seen, a piece of paper, which I could throw overboard and watch. I had nothing on me. To run down for it I didn't dare. There was no time. All at once my strained, yearning stare distinguished a white object floating within a yard of the ship's side. . . . Now I had what I wanted--the saving mark for my eyes. (296)

The captain's giving Leggatt the hat was an act of sympathy; presumably, it was intended to save Leggatt from sunburn, and the captain implies that Leggatt has left the hat behind to provide him with the knowledge he needs to save the ship. The captain tries to suggest that if he had not brought his ship near the treacherous shore he would not have been able to test himself, to use the cap as a mark in swinging his ship away from the shore, and thus to master her and prove his competence. This, however, cannot be justification enough for the captain's act, which, inevitably, strikes one as an act of incompetence; only by chance the captain manages to save himself and the crew.

As it happens however, the captain's act is his way of affirming his identification with his double, saying to him that he, too, can now show confidence and determination, and face challenge; moreover, he has gained excellent self-control. He can give necessary orders to his crew and subdue their rebellion without having to resort to brutality. The captain has outgrown anxiety, uncertainty and become whole:

> And I was alone with her. Nothing! no one in the world should stand now between us, throwing a shadow on the way of silent knowledge and mute affection, the perfect communion of a seaman with his first command. (295)

However, it is really less than a "perfect communion," for he does not integrate himself into the community of sailors on-board the ship who remain apart from him and follow his orders grudgingly and amid fear and distrust. What he has achieved is that he has developed the ability to occupy a position, fulfilled himself as an individual. As Joan E. Steiner suggests, the captain in the end is "free to establish a bond of fellowship with his crew and pursue his chosen profession at sea."[75] But the story does not show the captain's achievement of community.

In a discussion of "The Secret Sharer," Ted Boyle, however, suggests that the captain achieves community, though not with the crew, with humanity. He interprets the hat's falling off Leggatt's head as an indication of the fugitive's separateness from the captain. The captain, according to Boyle, recognizes Leggatt as a separate human being, and, therefore,

> his protection of Leggatt becomes sympathy for a

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[75] Joan E. Steiner, "The Secret Sharer": Complexities of the Doubling Relationship," Conradiana XII, 3(1980): 182.

> fellow human being rather than a disguised self-indulgence. . . . In helping Leggatt to escape, the captain establishes a solidarity with weak, yet strangely courageous mankind, and discovers, once this solidarity is established, that it is the element necessary for the self-confidence without which one cannot undertake a job so demanding as that of ship's captain.[14]

Boyle misconstrues the captain's helping Leggatt to escape as an act of solidarity, for, if anything, the act suggests the captain's recognition that his double, the other criminal self, must be abandoned if he is to take command of his ship. The captain's taking the ship close to the shore suggests his sympathetic identification with the man, whom he must help, but in doing so he must, paradoxically, free himself from Leggatt. In the end, the captain has dissociated himself from Leggatt, ready to take command, but is also isolated from the crew.

Under Western Eyes, however, presents its hero's development in communal terms, for Razumov progresses from isolation to a social identity. The novel's narrator deploys the points of view of Razumov and other characters to analyse Raumov's moral situation: his betrayal requires sympathetic understanding, but it is, nonetheless, a serious offence, and only by achieving community with other people can he redeem himself. The perspectives of the other characters in particular emphasize the identity between Haldin and Razumov, and thus suggest the gravity of Razumov's crime, cause him suffering, and imply his moral need for social integration. When suffering caused by a general feeling of identity has prepared Razumov to establish solidarity, the narrator uses Razumov's perspective to demonstrate his moral ability for communion.

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[14] Ted E. Boyle, Symbol and Meaning in the Fiction of Joseph Conrad (London: Mouton & Co., 1965) 140.

The narrator begins by presenting a hero who resembles the captain of "The Secret Sharer" in his isolation from his social environment. Razumov, who is "as lonely in the world as a man in the deep sea" (10), endeavours to keep himself detached from the political unrest of his country. But his desire for complete isolation is impracticable, for in a society where the twin forces of autocracy and rebellion are endlessly in conflict, the individual is susceptible to demands of allegiance from these forces. Haldin, after killing an autocratic minister, wants Razumov to help him escape. Razumov overturns the murderer's request for reasons the narrator dramatizes as he presents Razumov's experience from his own perspective.

Soon after Haldin seeks help, Razumov feels that if he became involved he could be arrested, "shut up in a fortress, worried, badgered, perhaps ill-used." While

> Others had fathers, mothers, brothers, relations, connexions, to move heaven and earth on their behalf--he had no one. The very officials that sentenced him some morning would forget his very

> existence before sunset. . . . A simple expulsion from the University (the very least that could happen to him), with an impossibility to continue his studies anywhere, was enough to ruin utterly a young man depending entirely upon the development of his natural abilities in the world. He was a Russian: and for him to be implicated meant simply sinking into the lowest social depths amongst the hopeless and destitute --the night birds of the city. (21, 25-26)

The lack of a family is the cause of Razumov's feeling of loneliness, but the feeling that he cannot expect help from any relations if he became implicated in a political crime and that involvement in politics might jeopardize his career has alienated him from the outside world; he cannot identify with, or come to the help of another man, cannot honour the trust put in him, but must keep himself apart to fulfill his selfish goal of academic distinction, as the narrator keeps reminding us. Certainly, by presenting Razumov's predicament from his own perspective, the narrator creates sympathy for the hero, and thus justifies Conrad's assertion in the Author's Note that "Razumov is treated sympathetically" (xxxi).

Nevertheless, the narrator suggests that Razumov's betrayal of Haldin was a mistake. Just as Marlow, despite his sympathy for Jim cannot condone the chief mate's offence, the teacher of languages cannot overlook Razumov's betrayal. By incorporating Haldin's point of view into the narrative, the narrator suggests that Razumov's act is, indeed, a trangression against human bonds:

> Yes, Razumov. Yes, brother. . . . we have made the sacrifice of our lives, but all the same I want to escape if it can be done. It is not my life I want to save, but my power to do. I won't live idle. Oh no! Don't make any mistake, Razumov. . . . All I want you to do is to help me vanish. (19-20)

Haldin is committed to the idea that he exists for the Russian people; his brutal act was intended to free the masses from tyranny and advance a patriotic cause. While we cannot blame Razumov for not sharing Haldin's political idealism (the language teacher believes both the revolutionists and the autocrats are cynics), we cannot condone his violation of the human bond that exists between people. Razumov should have respected Haldin's appeal to him as "brother."

By using the perspectives of Razumov and Haldin, the narrator suggests that Razumov's betrayal needs to be understood sympathetically, but he has violated and dishonoured human solidarity. His isolation from the outside world has made his betrayal possible. It is only through suffering caused by an assumed identity between Haldin and himself that Razumov will symbolically undo the treachery to Haldin, demonstrate a capacity for communion with others, and attain a social self.

Razumov's moral progress is made possible by his having been sent to Geneva as a government spy. Through his allegiance to the regime, Razumov wanted to ensure his freedom to pursue, in isolation from his social environment, his goal of academic distinction, but, ironically, his loyalty entraps him not only in the web of government but also in that of the revolutionists. That he is ensnared becomes apparent to Razumov in the closing moments of his visit with Mikulin, soon after Haldin's arrest:

> "But, really, I must claim the right to be done once for all with that man. And in order to accomplish this I shall take liberty . . ."
>
> Razumov on his side of the table bowed slightly to the seated bureaucrat.
>
> " . . . To retire--simply to retire," he finished with great resolution.
>
> ...
>
> An unhurried voice said -
>
> "Kirylo Sidorovitch."
>
> Razumov at the door turned his head.
>
> "Where to?" asked Councillor Mikulin softly. (99)

Razumov is to go to Geneva, of course, to act as government spy. However, by involving Razumov in politics, Mikulin, unwittingly, provides Razumov with an opportunity for realizing his social self. In the novel's moral scheme, Razumov's coming to Geneva is a means to reconfront him with Haldin in the guise of his family and friends, to make him suffer and develop communal feelings.

Partly to set the stage for Razumov's meeting with Haldin's family and friends, Conrad breaks the chronology of events after Part 1. Soon after Mikulin's "where to?" we enter right into the lives of the Haldins in Geneva about the time of Haldin's execution in St. Petersburg. Thus there is a slight break in time sequence, which enables Conrad not to focus on Raumov's role as a spy but on circumstances that inevitably lead to the question of Razumov's and Haldin's identity. Before we see Razumov as a revolutionary agent, we hear how intensely Mrs. Haldin and Natalia mourn the loss of Victor, and how the mother wishes to understand the circumstances in which her son was caught and to have confirmed her conviction that his death is not connected with any weakness of his own. The Haldins already have a high opinion of Razumov from a former letter of Haldin's, in which the victim praises Razumov highly. Quite understandably, therefore, the grief-stricken family, as well as their Professor friend, will turn to Razumov for information about Haldin; they will expect to hear from him something that will satisfy particularly the mother's needs. As it happens, Razumov cannot free himself from Haldin, for Haldin's family and friends continually suggest by words and gesture that the newly arrived agent and the dead revolutionary have a common identity. Consequently, Razumov experiences inner torment, which ultimately produces in him social instinct.

In the second part of the novel, Razumov's interaction with the incarnations of Haldin is the focus of the narrator's presentation of Razumov's diary. During each interaction the point of view of an incarnation emphasizes the bond between Haldin and Razumov, suggesting the seriousness of his offence, and causing him suffering. His first significant meeting is with Natalia. With her eyes full of tears, she says to Razumov, "Can't you guess who I am? . . . Victor--Victor Haldin!" (172). One immediately recalls the scene in Razumov's apartment in St. Petersbug, where Haldin tells Razumov of his sister: "She has the most trustful eyes of any human being that ever walked this earth" (22). She wants support from Razumov as she would from her brother if she was distressed; from her point of view, the two men are the same. Natalia views the relationship between her brother and Razumov as "the very brotherhood of souls." Significantly, Haldin had earlier called Razumov a brother. Razumov has no existence independent of Haldin. He senses that Natalia believes in his and Haldin's common identity, and he begins to suffer the pangs of conscience: "He positively reeled. He leaned against the terrace" (172). Razumov presumably realizes that it is a great crime to betray one's brother and dishonour human bond. Razumov's experience is the reverse of the captain's pleasant experience of his identity with his double.

Razumov's first meeting with the Professor also focuses on the general assumption of the Russians in Geneva of the bond between Razumov and Haldin. Because the narrator is the Haldins' friend, he feels an obligation to encourage Razumov to satisfy the mother's expection to hear something good about her son, and in so doing he intensifies Razumov's suffering. Acting under the assumption that Razumov and Haldin were best of friends he unwittingly says tormenting things: "There was something peculiar in the circumstances of [Haldin's] arrest. You no doubt know the whole truth" (186). One of the reasons Conrad uses a language teacher as narrator is that he wants us to think about language, its elusiveness and uncommunicativeness, and its hidden power to cause suffering. The narrator's comment to Razumov indicates the last characteristic:

> I felt my arm seized above the elbow, and next instant found myself swung so as to face Mr. Razumov.
>
> "You spring up from the ground before me with this talk. Who the devil are you? This is not to be borne! Why! What for? What do you know what is or is not peculiar? What have you to do with any confounded circumstances, or anything that happens in Russia, anyway?" (186)

The narrator's comment has made clear to Razumov that the narrator also considers him Haldin's double, someone whom Haldin would tell everything about his secret activities.

Again this tortures Razumov, for it makes clear to him the enormity of hiscrime of betraying his brother; the interrogatives in his protest against the narrator's comment indicate the depth of Razumov's suffering.

Later the narrator attempts again to extract information from Razumov with the same results:

> "Yes, I see you here; and I assume you are here on account of the Haldin affair?"
>
> His manner changed.
>
> "You call it the Haldin affair--do you?" he observed indifferently. (192)

As Karl suggests, "Razumov exists only because Haldin exists for the people of Geneva."[11] The professor's perspective, like Natalia's, confronts Razumov with his identity with the man he gave up to execution and reminds him of the enormity of his crime, making him more and more bitter.

Haldin keeps coming back to Razumov also in the guise of the revolutionaries. Peter Ivanovitch, for example, flatters Razumov by saying,

> Just now you are a man associated with a great deed, which had been hoped for, and tried for too, without success. People have perished for attempting that which you and Haldin have done at last. (207)

Peter Ivanovitch's perspective here suggests the general belief in the friendship and community between Haldin and Razumov, which is of course a lie; Razumov must bear with the fame which came to him as a result of the betrayal of his double.

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[11] A Reader's Guide to Conrad, 218.

By using the perspectives of various characters--Haldin, Natalia, the Professor, Peter Ivanovitch--the narrator has repeatedly asserted the seriousness of Razumov's crime, his betrayal of human solidarity. The repetitiveness is Conrad's way of implying that Razumov can redeem himself only through community with others. As he reads the novel, the reader begins to feel that it is the only way in which Razumov could develop morally.

Soon, however, we begin to notice the positive effect of people's assumption of the identity between Razumov and Haldin. As a result of suffering, he begins to show a capacity to feel for others, what he obviously lacked when he betrayed Haldin. This becomes very noticeable from the way he associates with Tekla. When they first meet, he takes his hat off to her, and she, in her turn, offers to take care of him if he "were to get ill" or become injured (233) while performing some dangerous work. Her words are an expression of love, something he has been deprived of all his life. When he learns that she, too, is isolated, with no one to care for her he, too, is capable of intimacy:

> "It will be easier to call you Tekla, as you direct me," said Razumov, "if you consent to call me Kirylo, when we are talking like this-quietly--only you and me." (236)

Razumov has begun to feel for another person who has also had a difficult life, to associate with her on a personal level. Thus he begins a process which will end with his attainment of a social identity.

Through this personal relationship with Tekla Razumov, the son of reason, who exercised his intellect to betray Haldin,[18] reveals an emotional aspect which will eventually help him discover his social self. The narrator does not any longer need the perspectives of other characters to analyse Razumov's crime and to imply his moral need. Having achieved that goal, he now writes from Razumov's perspective to present Razumov's attainment of a social identity. When he learns of the death of Ziemianitch, whom he had tortured on the night Haldin appeared in his apartment, Razumov again reveals emotion, feeling "pity," and remorse, and beginning to write his diary. He writes, significantly, sitting under "a bronze effigy of Jean Jacques Rousseau" (290), the advocate of the emotional and sentimental. The writing itself is a confession of his cruelty to Ziemianitch and Haldin, an acknowledgement of his human inadequacy, and by extension, a recognition of the need for a sympathetic understanding of people.

Suffering caused by the assumed identity between Razumov and Haldin and its implications has, then, produced in the hero the capacity for remorse as well as an understanding of other people. It is only logical, therefore, that Razumov should go on , soon, in Part 4, to make his confession to Natalia and the revolutionists. The opening of Part 4 takes us back in time to events concerning Razumov's leaving Russia; thus, Conrad brings the reader back in the middle of the moral problem of betrayal. That Razumov's confession should come immediately after the atmosphere of betrayal has been recreated suggests the urgency of the hero's recognition of human bonds, and therefore, makes perfect sense aesthetically.

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[18] Razumov's tendency to rationalize, to intellectualize is evident in the credo he formulates to justify his betrayal: History not Theory/Patriotism not Internationalism/ Evolution not Revolution/ Direction not Destruction/Unity not Disruption. (66)

It was a difficult task for Conrad to complete the part dealing with Razumov's confession. J. I. M. Stewart writes:

> ["The Secret Sharer"] was written when the novel was nearing completion--and Conrad was in that state of desperation to which he was reduced by the strain of a long imaginative task. 'There's neither inspiration nor hope in my work,' we have seen him write to Norman Douglas about the novel in December 1909. With whatever degree of conscious intention, he found relief by turning aside from the theme of betrayal to the story of a man who, appealed to in a dreadful crisis by one of his kind, acknowledges an obligation and discharges it at great risk.[7]

While the writing of "The Secret Sharer" gave Conrad relief from the sombre reality of Under Western Eyes, as Stewart suggests, it also afforded him the strength necessary to complete the novel. In the story the captain becomes whole through his association with his double, learns to fit himself to his role as captain, although he remains outside the community of sailors on his ship. Having presented the captain's psychological growth in the story, Conrad is now able to complete the process of the novel's hero's development (begun by the suffering caused by the general feeling of his identity with Haldin), his integration into society. In the story, the captain's personality grows through his loyalty to the double; in the novel, the hero grows morally as he shows loyalty to the incarnation of his double, Natalia, and symbolically undoes the original perfidy to Haldin, implying that he should have honoured the dead man's appeal for trust. This is suggested by his confession to Natalia.

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[7] Stewart, 240.

Razumov's confession is precipitated by his meeeting with Mrs. Haldin:

> The fifteen minutes with Mrs. Haldin were like the revenge of the unknown: that white face, that weak distinct voice; that head, at first turned to him eagerly, then, after a while, still light of the room in which his words which he tried to subdue resounded so loudly--had troubled him like some strange discovery. (340)

Razumov's particular attention to Haldin's mother's face, voice, and head implies his ability to feel the depth of another person's misery. He now begins to see more clearly than ever before the violative meaning of his action, which has produced so many of his tormentors. Haldin has come back to haunt him "through the affection of that old woman . . . the thoughts of all these people posing as lovers of humanity" (341).

This discovery is followed by his encounter with Natalia whose goodness draws Razumov to her:

> It was as though he were coming to himself in the awakened consciousness of that marvellous harmony of feature, of lines, of glances, of voice, which made of the girl before him a being so rare, outside, and, as it were, above the common notion of beauty. He looked at her so long that she coloured slightly. (342-43)

Razumov's sensitive appreciation of the girl's whole nature indicates that he feels an emotional bond with her. He falls in love with Natalia and gains morally through his feeling for her. He needs her but must not take advantage of her and must selflessly renounce her to honour his bond with her. "I felt," he writes in his diary, "that I have ended by loving you. And to tell you that I must confess" (361). Assured by her assertion that she believes in "the efficacy of remorse" (252), he realizes that she is the only person to whom he could pour out the story of crime and thus unburden himself of his ancient-mariner like guilt, he confesses.

Leaving Natalia, he runs out into the rain, returns to his room to announce "I am washed clean" (357) to his landlord. Razumov has redeemed himself, as the cleansing by rain symbolises, by not betraying again, and by repenting he has, symbolically, honoured the trust put in him by Haldin, a fellow human in need of sympathy. Thus, he has achieved a social self.

Razumov's attainment of a social self suggests Conrad's belief that "human life is social, that there is nowhere for the individual to retire in isolation."[80] Because Razumov was lost in his solitary dream of academic success, he was unrelated to others. Suffering has enabled him to be loyal to people, as evident in his confession to Natalia, and feeling for others. It is such loyalty to and understanding of others that make life in society possible.

Those critics who interpret Razumov's second confession, to the revolutionaries, as his declaration of his independence from all ties and go on to suggest that Razumov's attitude is ultimately anti-social, base their argument on the following passage:

> Today, of all days since I came amongst you, I was made safe, and today I made myself free from all falsehood, from remorse--independent of every single human being on this earth. (368)

It is a declaration of Razumov's independence from the radicals, not from all humanity, a fact that critics overlook. Razumov implies that he has alienated himself from all political groups, the government and the anarchists. In one sense, he is "independent of" Natalia: she cannot haunt him any more as an incarnation of Haldin, because in confesssing he has laid Haldin to rest. The Natalia who exists for him after the confession is a different character, a loving being, an embodiment of forgiveness who undid "the evil, in making [him] betray [himself] back into truth and peace" (349). His confidence in Natalia indicates that he has entered a kind of non-institutionalized society of human beings based on love and friendship, symbolically through Natalia. And through solidarity with Tekla he has made his entry into society real.

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[80] Fleishman, 72.

After Razumov's ear drums are burst by Nikita and Razumov has a tram accident, Tekla can, therefore, say "I am a relation . . . This young man is a Russian, and I am his relation." Then,

> She sat down calmly, and took his head on her lap; her scared faded eyes avoided looking at his deathlike face. ... Razumov's new-found relation never shed a tear but the officials had some difficulty in inducing her to go away. (371)

Razumov has won his mother, a family, love, all that characterizes domestic tradition and society, all that Razumov lacked:

> "You are a son, a brother, a nephew, a cousin--I don't know what--to no end of people. I am just a

> man. Here I stand before you. . . . Did it ever occur to you how a man who had never heard a word of affection or praise in his life would think on matters on which you would think first with or against your class, your domestic tradition--your fireside prejudices? (61)

Now Razumov has entered that society of domestic tradition, he has a home, and a mother in Tekla who selflessly nurses him.

Razumov's and the captain's developments thus illustrate Conrad's double vision of the individual. The captain's isolation enables and encourages him to identify with an imaginary double and remain loyal to him at the expense of his duty to convention and his ship with the result that he becomes an integrated personality and fulfills himself as an individual. Razumov's isolation forces him to betray his double. But he cannot shake off the identity between him and Haldin, which leads him gradually to discover his social self.

The unwavering consistency of the captain's lone point of view focuses intensely on his isolation, identity, and psychological growth. In Under Western Eyes, the narrator presents Razumov's story from different perspectives so that the reader understands how the opinions of others cause Razumov to grow morally and discover slowly his social identity. The slow realization of Razumov's social self, his emergence as a new man, is matched by the slow action of the

Geneva section of the novel. When Razumov is ready to confess and to complete his progress to a new identity, Conrad breaks the chronology of events, takes us back to the time of betrayal, recreates the atmosphere of betrayal. Thus Razumov's confession becomes very significant.

V. 'The Planter of Malata' and *Victory*

The composition history of *Victory*, like that of *Under Western Eyes*, suggests two characteristic features of Conrad's work habit: his inability to conceive and plan a long work adequately and his tendency to write shorter works when the long work's material, on which he had been working for some time, became stale. In April 1912, Conrad told Pinker that he had a "short story," tentatively called "Dollars" in mind;[81] the eventual product of this short story enterprise was the novel *Victory*. The short story got out of hand, just as "Jim" and "Razumov" had, growing into full-length novels. During the period in which the projected "Dollars" continued to expand into a novel, Conrad also wrote three stories, "The Inn of the Two Witches," "The Planter of Malata," and "Because of the Dollars." The first of these does not relate to *Victory* in any significant way. The other two works have characters and themes which are similar to those in the novel.

Some of the characters in "Because of the Dollars" resemble some of *Victory*'s characters. Both Anne and Lena, the heroines of the story and the novel respectively, are women of ill-repute who give their lives to save the lives of the works' heroes. In both works an evil trio of desperadoes pays a visit to the isolated place in which the hero lives. The Davidsons of the story and the novel, moreover, are good and generous men, who play the parts of general observers of events.

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[81] *Three Lives*, 715.

In addition, one notices in both works the use of the theme of coins. The obsolete coins of the story remind one of the false coin the hero's father in the novel perceives life to be.

The relationship between the works does not go beyond these incidental similarities, however. It is their difference which is more important: "Because of the Dollars" is primarily concerned with presenting a good man, Captain Davidson, as a victim of other people's malice and ill-fortune, while substantially and in its central emphasis Victory, like "The Planter of Malata," concerns the self-exiled individual's predicament; therefore, "The Planter" forms a close parallel to Victory.

The principal similarity between "The Planter of Malata" and Victory lies in the author's conception of the works' central characters. Seeing much evil and corruption in the world, Heyst chooses to live out his life on an island as an observer, never a participant in human affairs. Renouard, the story's hero, is a leader of men, an adventurer, but he is isolated as well. Like Heyst, he wilfully withdraws to an island, "a hermit on the sea shore."[12]

Heyst and Renouard are alike also because their isolated existences on their respective islands draw the world's attention. Using language, the world's inhabitants define either the solitary himself or the nature of his existence, showing thereby that he cannot completely detach himself from the world. People fasten names onto Heyst: "Enchanted Heyst," "Hard Facts," "Heyst the Enemy," "Hermit," and the "Spider."[63] The outer world intrudes by defining Heyst's character with these labels, and Heyst cannot resist this. Renouard receives the same sort of treatment from the world. He too becomes a victim of gossip. The "meddlesome journalist," who resembles Schomberg of the novel, the breeder of gossip, constantly defines Renouard's life on his island: Renouard 0 is "leading an unhealthy life. . . . Solitude works like poison" (16), etc.

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[12] Joseph Conrad Within the Tides (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1963) 33. All further references to the story are to this edition and will appear in parentheses in the text.

More importantly, these island-dweller heroes of the short and long works cannot entirely withdraw from human relationships. Heyst involves himself in the human world twice, once when he lends Morrison money to save his ship from confiscation by the Portuguese authorities, and again when he rescues Lena from the vicious Zanziacomo. Heyst's second involvement proves fatal for it rouses against him evil forces who kill Lena, and her death forces him to commit suicide. In "The Planter," Renouard engages an assistant and thus, unwittingly, prepares the way for his involvement with Felicia Moorsom. It turns out that the assistant had been engaged to Felicia, but he hid himself in Malata when he was wrongly accused of embezzlement. Renouard conceals the fact that his assistant had died recently and sails with the Moorsoms to Malata ostensibly to find the man, but actually to enjoy the company of Felicia whom he madly desires. The consequences of Renouard's involvement with Felicia are fatal. Once she learns of the truth, she scornfully turns him away, and Renouard commits suicide.

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[63] These names are used repeatedly in the first several chapters of Victory.

However, Conrad's treatment of the isolated men's involvements shows his different motivation: through Renouard's attachment to Felicia he suggests that Renouard is a private individual while through Heyst's ties Conrad portrays the solitary's progress to a social self. The story presents Renouard's involvement by placing it in the context of his willing isolation, and by focusing on the planter's feelings for Felicia. An omniscient narrator tells Renouard's story in a straightforward manner, beginning with a long introductory section, followed by conflict and slow resolution; he employs the different but complementary narrative segments cumulatively to emphasize Renouard's isolation.

The introductory segment of "The Planter of Malata" (the first two sections) is carefully orchestrated to establish the nature of Renouard's isolation. The opening section introduces us to the character's situation as, during a conversation with the editor of the principal newspaper of the great colonial city, Renouard declares, "Everybody knows I am not a society man" (18). By the word "society" Renouard means the fashionable class of people or trivial social gatherings. But the word ironically implies that Renouard has, through his voluntary withdrawal from society, become unfit for ties with other humans. This impression intensifies when we recall the various comments about Renouard's isolation that are used throughout the narrative. After leaving home at nineteen, we learn, for instance, Renouard has felt no need to "see a single human being to whom he was related, for many years" (34). As he does not feel a genuine desire for human communion, his intercourse with his so-called journalist "friend" is "that of [the] merely outward intimacy some young men get drawn into easily" (57). Renouard's purely formal and superficial relations with his employers, agents, exploring parties, and plantation crews also confirm that he has never "needed other company than his own" (57).

Renouard is isolated from his kind because he is unable to accept what is human. The function of the opening conversation between the journalist and Renouard is to drive this meaning home. Renouard tells the editor that he finds the appearance of people in the city "awfully expressive." To emphasize the peculiarity of Renouard's vision, the narrator offers this gloss:

> Geoffrey Renouard did not tell his journalist friend that the suggestions of his own face, the face of a friend, bothered him as much as the others. He detected a degrading quality in the touches of age which every day adds to a human countenance. They

> moved and disturbed him, like the signs of a horrible inward travail which was frightfully apparent to the fresh eye he had brought from his isolation in Malata, where he had settled after five strenuous years of adventure and exploration. (16)

Renouard's incapacity to see people as they appear to us in society and to accept the realities of aging is indication enough that he is unsuited for the human world and that he is emotionally isolated from his kind.

To emphasize Renouard's isolation, the narrator looks critically at the planter's fascination with Felicia Moorsom. To Renouard Felicia is not a human being but all appearance, as his report to the editor about his impression of her at the dinner at Dunster's indicates. Renouard perceives Felicia as "a head of a character which to him appeared peculiar, something--well--pagan, crowned with a great wealth of hair . . . magnificently red . . ." (20). He is struck by the "extraordinary splendour" of Felicia's shoulders and bare arms and by the "admirable contour of the face, straight fine nose with delicate nostrils, the exquisite crimson brushstroke of the lips." The narrator completes his rather ponderous description of Renouard's first impression of Felicia thus:

> The expression of the eyes was lost in a shadowy mysterious play of jet and silver, stirring under the red coppery gold of the hair as though she had been a being made of ivory and precious metals

> changed into living tissue. (21)

Renouard responds to Felicia in terms of visual impressions, sees her as an art object, as a statue in a museum, not as a human being. That he sees her thus indicates he is isolated from humanity and could not accept an ordinary flesh and blood person as his love. Renouard's fascination with Felicia does not indicate, therefore, an attempt to "reluctantly resume some relationship with mankind,"[14] as Juliet McLauchlan suggests, but affirms rather his incapacity or lack of desire to return to human society through normal relationship. Humanity has never interested him and never will.

Through the first two sections of the story, then, the narrator provides us with the necessary information about Renouard for understanding his character. He is emotionally detached from humanity in his incapacity to accept what is human; therefore, we begin to feel that his involvement with Felicia is not an indication of his social instinct. When the conflict is introduced belatedly (about fifteen pages into the narrative), it is to provide a more intense impression of Renouard's separateness, to suggest that he can love only himself, not others. As the editor imparts to Renouard the information that Felicia is, in fact, engaged to be married to another man, Renouard's desire for an illusion, an unreal being, becomes intense. Returning to his schooner upon spending an evening with Felicia Moorsom and her father,

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[14] Juliet McLauchlan, "Conrad's Heart of Emptiness: The Planter of Malata," Conradiana 5 (1986) 135.

> He lay on his back, sighing profoundly in the dark, and suddenly beheld his very own self, carrying a small bizarre lamp, reflected in a long mirror inside a room in an empty and unfurnished palace. In this startling image of himself he recognized somebody he had to follow--the frightened guide of his dream. . . . The sickly white light of dawn showed him the head of a statue. Its marble hair was done in the bold lines of a helmet, on its lips the chisel had left a faint smile, and it resembled Miss Moorsom. (38)

As Bruce Johnson convincingly suggests, Renouard's passion is "not so much for Miss Moorsom as for the dream image of himself." The "frightened guide of his dream" is Felicia, actually Renouard's other self: Johnson points out that in the manuscript "frightened" reads "fraternal".[85] Felicia is, indeed, an aspect of Renouard, a dream image that he must create and recreate in his mind. Thus he suggests his inability to accept Felicia as a human being and to overcome his isolation through normal relationship but his ability to remain absorbed in his selfhood.

Conrad does not resolve the conflict quickly but extends it partly to present in detail the other characters' attitude to Felicia at the same time as he describes Renouard's feelings for her. Thus, Conrad not only shows how the planter receives their impression but the author also emphasizes Renouard's absorption in his personal vision and detachment from the actual woman, and by extension, all humanity. After the narrator has presented to us Renouard's first impression of Felicia as a statue, the Editor says, "Striking girl--eh?" implying thereby that she is mere appearance, a true member of the world of Fashion and Finance, who has "been playing the London hostess to the tiptop people ever since she put her hair up, probably" (25). Again, soon after Renouard perceives Felicia as a goddess, the Professor confronts him with the truth that she is not capable of genuinely loving anyone. Her quest for her lost lover is undertaken to redress a wrong, and, therefore, the Professor is not "even sure how far this sentimental pilgrimage is genuine" (45). But other people's impressions of Felicia cannot change Renouard's impression of her. He cannot tear himself away from the ideal being he thinks she is: "a magic painting of charm, fascination . . ." (51). While through other characters' attitude to Felicia the reader discovers her as a cold, shallow, society woman, Renouard remains obsessed with his ideal vision.

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[85] Bruce Johnson, Conrad's Models of Mind (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1971) 189.

The consequence of Renouard's obsession is that it will leave him with a sense of nothingness and isolation and force him to commit suicide. When Renouard takes this imaginary being to his private island, he prepares for such an aftermath. The resolution of the conflict focuses on Renouard's attempt to possess Felicia, to make her his own.

In a previous endeavour to do the same during a dream, he destroyed her: her head crumbled into dust. In trying to accept Felicia into his life, he really destroys her or his vision of her. When he pours out his feelings for her, she expresses her one desire, to exercise power over her lost lover's fate, which to her is "truth." Soon thereafter, he kills his ideal being, saying that her soul is "made of foam" (76), and takes his own life because he experiences terrible isolation and void.

Axel Heyst of Victory, however, is different from Renouard from the beginning, for despite his resolve to live in isolation he is not unsuited for human relationships or incapable of falling in love with a flesh and blood human being, who pulls him toward life and helps him to return to human society.

The novel's presentation of Heyst's involvement in human affairs is, we should note at the outset, more complex than the story's treatment of Renouard's involvement. The novel offers a complicated examination of Heyst's relationship to more characters; it presents the Swede's involvement with Morrison first and, then, with Lena, which is seen in the context of his allegiance to his father and the outside world. The involvement intensifies the conflict between Heyst's social instinct and isolation, and resolves it by bringing Heyst back to society. Whereas the story uses a single narrative perspective and linear action, the novel uses multiple perspectives and time-shift method to relate

Heyst to other characters, to analyse his moral situation, and to imply his moral need to integrate himself into human society.

The opening narrator[4] begins the novel by telling us how Axel Heyst, the former manager of the now liquidated Tropical Belt Coal Company, lives alone on the island of Samburan:

> His most frequent visitors were shadows, the shadows of clouds, relieving the monotony of the inanimate, brooding sunshine of the tropics. His nearest neighbour . . . was an indolent volcano which smoked all day with its head just above the northern horizon, and at night levelled at him, from amongst the clear stars, a dull red glow, expanding and collapsing spasmodically like the end of a gigantic cigar puffed at intermittently in the dark. Axel Heyst was also a smoker; and when he lounged out on his veranda with his cheroot, the last thing before going to bed, he made in the night the same sort of glow and of the same size as that other one so many miles away. (19-20)

Here one may get the impression that Heyst, like Renouard, "never needed other company than his own." However, Heyst is more complex. The association of Heyst with the volcano suggests that inside him there are burning fires of distress, and it foreshadows the tormenting contradiction in the man between his loyalty to the philosophy of withdrawal and his growing desire to participate in life.

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[4] This narrator is necessary for Conrad to present the opinions of people, in the real world of Sourabaya, about Heyst. He has picked up various impressions of Heyst while chatting with his friends at Schomberg's hotel and presents them in a gossipy manner.

After getting the character in with a strong impression and suggesting that isolation causes suffering, the narrator disrupts the time sequence of events. Instead of narrating Heyst's activities in the present, he takes us back to the time before the liquidation of Heyst's company so that he can analyse Heyst's moral situation, expose the inadequacy of Heyst's attitude to life. To this end, the narrator presents an account of Heyst's involvement with Morrison. The narrator has, probably, picked up from Schomberg's hotel the story of the meeting between Heyst and Morrison, which results in their relationship, and he presents it from Morrison's perspective. We hear from the narrator about Morrison's generosity to the natives, his lending them money and never collecting his debts; as a result, he has no spare cash in hand to pay the fine which the Portuguese officials have inflicted on him. Morrison's is, then, the plight of a good and generous man, who is in need of help, and it is from his point of view that Heyst's response to the captain's story is to be seen:

> 'Fever!' he cried. 'Give me fever. Give me plague. They are diseases. One gets over them. But I am being murdered by the Portuguese. The gang here downed me at last among them. I am to have my throat

> cut the day after tomorrow.'
>
> In the face of this passion Heyst made, with his eyebrows, a silent movement of surprise which would not have been misplaced in a drawing-room. Morrison's despairing reserve had broken down. He had been wandering with a dry throat all over that miserable town of mud hovels, silent with no soul to turn to in his distress, and positively maddened by his thoughts, and suddenly he had stumbled on a white man. . . . He let himself go for the mere relief of violent speech, his elbows planted on the table, his eyes blood shot, his voice nearly gone, the brim of his round pith hat shading an unshaven, livid face. His white clothes, which he had not taken off for three days, were dingy. He had already gone to the bad, past redemption. The sight was so shocking to Heyst; but he let nothing of it appear in his bearing, conçealing his impression under that good society manner of his. Polite attention, what's due from one gentleman listening to another, was what he showed; and, as usual, it was catching; so that Morrison pulled himself together and finished his narrative in a conversational tone, with a man-of-the world air. (26)

Morrison's "dry throat," "blood shot eyes," near loss of voice, unshaven pallid face, and dirty clothes picture him as a miserable man. But Heyst can respond to Morrison's story only with "surprise," "good society manner," and "polite attention," which would have been appropriate in a "drawing room." Seen from Morrison's perspective, Heyst's reaction must seem morally inadequate: Heyst is unable to give up his life-denying attitude and give himself entirely in sympathy to the distressed man. Morrison finds Heyst's attitude contagious ("catching"); it infects Morrison's judgment so that he does not immediately see that his auditor cannot truly share his grief. It does not, however, take Morrison long to sense Heyst's limitation:

> Morrison had pulled himself together, but one felt the snapping strain on his recovered self-possession. Heyst was beginning to say that he 'could very well see all the bearings of this unfortunate' when Morrison interrupted him jerkily.
>
> 'Upon my word, I don't know why I have been telling you all this. . . . (27)

Morrison seems to feel shame for exposing his emotion so violently to a man who responds to his story only with "formal alacrity and a polite murmur in which 'Trifle--delighted--of service,' could just be distinguished" (28). Morrison deserves more than Heyst's formal response, for "consummate politeness is not the right tonic for an emotional collapse" (30). Heyst's behaviour is responsible for the wretched captain's feeling of guilt at having received the Swede's money: "Heyst. I have robbed you" (30).

Although the telling of the story of Heyst's involvement from Morrison's perspective suggests Heyst's failure to achieve true community with Morrison, it also indicates, we should note, that Heyst is not devoid of sympathy; after all, he does come to Morrison's rescue. Only his resolve to keep himself free of human involvements prevents him from a total identification with the distressed captain. It is morally necessary, of course, that Heyst abandon his philosophy in favour of a spirit of collaboration which makes social life possible.

Soon after the Morrison episode, the narrator brings us forward in time to tell us about Heyst's second involvement, after the Tropical Belt Company has gone out of business. His second relationship strengthens our impression of Heyst's moral need to accept life in human society. The hero's second tie is presented from his own perspective. Heyst is staying at Schomberg's hotel in Chapter 1, Part 2. Used to living on an island, "clothed in . . . dark garments of leaves, in a great hush of silver and azure, where the sea without murmurs meets the sky in a ring of magic stillness" (68), Heyst finds the uproarious music at the hotel "awful". He is quite overcome by the "volume of noise" (69), and as Robert Secor rightly suggests, it is

> in this state of mind, the philosophical consciousness subverted by the sensual and irrational, that Heyst meets Lena, and it is from this perspective, we witness the meeting. . . . with

> the collapse of his rational resolve he can 'lose' himself in human sympathy. . . . [Heyst acts] in an hypnotic state in which he hopelessly watches the ineffectuality of all his principles.[87]

Feeling sorry for Lena's suffering at the hands of Zanziacomo, Heyst offers to help her escape the band. As they plan the escape they become intimate enough to kiss. But we are told, through his involvement with Lena, Heyst does not reveal his capacity and sympathy for a human being in distress. He is only fascinated with her voice:

> But her voice! It seduced Heyst by its amazing quality. It was a voice fit to utter the most exquisite things, a voice which would have made silly chatter supportable and the roughest talk fascinating. Heyst drank in its charm as one listens to the tone of some instrument without heeding the tune. (74)

Both Heyst's acting in an hypnotic state and his responding to the sound of Lena's voice, not to her story of suffering, show that he does not feel spontaneous sympathy for the distressed maiden. Once again his immoral philosophical resolve keeps him from true communion with another human being, and once again Conrad implies Heyst's incapacity for living in the human world and his need to recognize the importance of society, which is made possible by our sympathy for our fellow beings.

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[87] Robert Secor, The Rhetoric of Shifting Perspectives: Conrad's Victory, Pennsylvania State University Studies No. 32. 27-29

By shifting his attention from the present (Heyst's situation after the liquidation) to the past and to the present in which Heyst involves himself with Lena and thus using the perspectives of Morrison and Heyst, Conrad's narrator relates the central character to other characters and analyses Heyst's moral situation. Thus he brings together the Heyst of the past and the Heyst of the present, and shows that the Swede has not changed from what he was before. As before, he is not entirely capable of accepting humanity or maintaining perfect detachment. In spite of his limitations indicated by his two involvements, however, it is clear that he feels a tug in the direction of humanity, and, as F. R. Leavis suggests, Heyst is "not so self-sufficient morally as he had supposed."[11] Heyst needs other people, as evident in his bringing Lena to Samburan. By Heyst's own admission, "there must be a lot of the original Adam in me" (256), meaning that he could not restrain himself from becoming involved with Lena. But at this point of the novel, Heyst's involvement is half-hearted, and Conrad's presentation of Heyst's relationship with Lena in the latter half of the novel further exposes Heyst's moral limitations and implies that Heyst achieve excellence and find meaning in life through collaboration with others. However, Conrad not only shows Heyst's moral deficiency to embrace this spirit of fellowship, but also demonstrates how, at the end, Heyst succeeds, with Lena's help, in linking himself to the human society as represented by Lena.[18]

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[11] F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*: *George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad* (New York: New York UP, 1960) 205.

Heyst's moral limitations, Lena's role, and Heyst's capacity for communion are presented by an omniscient narrator. The first-person narrator is no longer necessary because he could not have been "logically present in Samburan,"[19] which is the setting for the novel's more important actions. Since he has full access to Heyst's consciousness, the omniscient narrator can present his difficulties in accepting the human world: difficulties arising from Heyst's allegiance to his father, firm in his conviction of the sanity of isolation from society. Heyst cannot easily and completely accept life because he is very much under the sway of his dead father.

It is to emphasize this that the narrator opens Part 3 not with a scene about how Heyst and Lena live on Samburan, after they have fled there. Rather, he disrupts time sequence and takes us back to the time immediately after the liquidation of Heyst's company when Heyst in his island home remembers his father. The shift in time indicates the son's devotion to his father and his philosophy, and shows that the elder Heyst's point of view with regard to life is still present; the shift also implies Heyst's moral need to accept life in society. Heyst retreats to the days he had spent with his father and and shows his deep regard for the property left him by the philosopher. By presenting Heyst's memory of his father and his property and Heyst's attitude to it, the narrator shows that that past is not easily forgotten.

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[18] As Fleishman suggests (76), "Almost *any* society would be sufficient to redeem the alienated: to Jim it offers itself in the form of a native town, to Heyst, in his personal attachment to Lena. . . . [Conrad] dramatically affirms that an integrated community, in whatever form and magnitude, is the only viable framework of a man's life."

[19] William Bonney, *Thorns and Arabesques: Contexts for Conrad's Fiction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1980) 190.

As Heyst confronts the desolation of his surroundings after the liquidation, he turns to his father

> He remembered the thin features, the great mass of white hair, and the ivory complexion. A five-branched candlestick stood on a little table by the side of the easy chair. They had been talking a long time. . . .
>
> 'What is one to do, then?' sighed the young man, regarding his father, rigid in the high-backed chair.
>
> 'Look on--make no sound," were the last words of the man who had spent his life in blowing blasts upon a terrible trumpet which filled heaven and earth with ruins, while mankind went on its way unheeding. (150)

By paying particular attention to details of the dead thinker's features and the setting of the conversation, Conrad suggests that the son fondly remembers the father and that he is virtually present in Samburan with his philosophy. The power of the thinker's point of view incapacitates Heyst to fully accept life.

Conrad follows Heyst's memory of his conversation with his father with a description of Heyst's inheritance:

> The elder Heyst had left behind him a little money and a certain quantity of movable objects, such as books, tables, chairs, and pictures, which might have complained of heartless desertion after many years of faithful service; for there is a soul in things. Heyst, our Heyst, had often thought of them, reproachful and mute, shrouded and locked up in those rooms, far away in London with the sounds of the street reaching them faintly, and sometimes a little sunshine, when the blinds were pulled up and the windows opened from time to time in pursuance of his original instructions and later reminders. It seemed as if in his conception of a world not worth touching, and perhaps not substantial enough to grasp, these objects familiar to his childhood and his youth, and associated with the memory of an old man, were the only realities, something having an absolute existence. He would never have them sold, or even moved from the places they occupied when he looked upon them last. When he was advised from London that his lease had expired, and that the house, with some others as like it as two peas, was to be demolished, he was surprisingly distressed.

> He had entered by then the broad, human path of inconsistencies. Already the Tropical Belt Coal Company was in existence. He sent instructions to have some of the things sent out to him at Samburan, just as any ordinary, credulous person would have done. They came torn out from their long repose--a lot of books, some chairs and tables, his father's portrait in oils, which surprised Heyst by its air of youth, because he remembered his father as a much older man; a lot of small objects, such as candlesticks, inkstands, and statuettes from his father's study, which surprised him because they looked so old and so much worn.
>
> The manager of the Tropical Belt Coal Company, unpacking them on the veranda in the shade besieged by a fierce sunshine, must have felt like a remorseful apostate before these relics. (151-52)

Heyst's fond memory of the care he had taken of his father's property implies the influence these objects have had on him. Heyst has the blinds raised and the windows opened, as if these objects were human beings who might need some fresh air and a bit of sunshine. He is distressed by the news that these objects cannot be kept in the London house, where they had been for years, because the house would be soon demolished. He must have them brought over to Samburan so that he can make the possession a part of his own life and accept the philosophy they represent (significantly, these objects include books, tables, chairs, all of which contributed to the formulation of the philosophy of detachment). But the irony of Heyst's visit to Sourabaya, made with the purpose of obtaining these objects, is that he returns to Samburan not only with the embodiments of his father's philosophy but also with Lena, who stands for human society. As Heyst later says to Lena: "I wonder . . . whether you are just a child, or whether you represent something as old as the world" (305). Lena does represent the universal feeling of human fellowship, and stands for society. If the shift in time indicates the extent of the influence of the dead philosopher on his son, it also suggests the weakness in the son's commitment to his father, for he cannot completely withdraw from relationships. That he returns to his island home with Lena implies the need for collaboration and communion.

When Heyst and Lena come to Samburan, however, Heyst has his dual allegiance, that to his father, represented by books, tables, chair and by the portrait, warning him to shun involvement,[11] and to Lena, bent upon the mission to bring Heyst back to life. The interaction between Lena and Heyst will, therefore, be difficult. The narrator tells us that Heyst cannot respond to Lena in a normal manner. When he kisses her lips, he tastes on them the "bitterness of a tear fallen there"; he regards this experience as "another appeal to his tenderness--a new seduction" (181). It appears that although Lena depends on him for her existence, he does not want to admit the fact. He tries to fight the emotional attraction he feels towards her, to avoid making any commitment.

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[11] As Gary Geddes suggests, Heyst's father is a haunting presence in the novel: "In the first chapter we learn . . . that Heyst got a few books from his late father; in the fourth chapter, that his father, who was somewhat of a crank philosopher, has written some of these books . . . The spectral figure of the elder Heyst surfaces in the third chapter of Part II, replete with enchantment and blue silk dressing-gown: 'Three years of such companionship at that plastic and impressionable age were bound to leave in that boy a profound distrust of life. The young man learned to reflect, which is a destructive process, a reckoning with the past.'" *Conrad's Later Novels* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 1980) 51-52

Heyst cannot commit himself to Lena despite her attempts to win his love because Heyst's father is still a powerful influnce on him. The conflict betwen the elder Heyst, and his point of view, and Lena, and her perspective, is an important aspect of the narrative; Conrad presents this conflict by switching from the present to the past and back to the present. Thus when Heyst is on the island with Lena, the narrative retreats to Heyst's past, records his memory of his father or depicts his identification with the dead man. This is how the narrator employs the dead thinker's perspective. But soon the narrative returns to the present, with Lena endeavouring to bring Heyst back to human community. The narrator thus uses Lena's perspective. At the end of the conflict between past and present, between the two perspectives, the reader's sense of Heyst's moral need for social integration is increased. Nowhere is this conflict between past and present more clear than in the scene in which Heyst, having learnt from Lena about the lie Schomberg has been spreading that Heyst is responsible for Morrison's death, begins to read his father's work:

> A great silence brooded over Samburan--the silence of the great heat that seems pregnant with fatal issues, like the silence of ardent thought. Heyst remained alone in the big room. The girl seeing him take up a book, had retreated to her chamber. Heyst sat down under his father's portrait; and the abominable calumny crept back into his recollection. The taste of it came on his lips, nauseating and corrosive like some kinds of poison. He was tempted to spit on the floor, naively, in sheer unsophisticated disgust of the physical sensation. He shook his head, surprised at himself. He was not used to receive his intellectual impressions in that way--reflected in movements of carnal emotion. He stirred impatiently in his chair, and raised the book to his eyes with both hands. It was one of his father's. He opened it haphazard, and his eyes fell on the middle of the page. The elder Heyst had written of everything in many books--of space and time, of animals and of stars; analysing ideas and actions, the laughter and the frowns of men, and the grimaces of their agony. The son read, shrinking into himself, composing his face as if under the author's eye, with a vivid consciousness of the

> portrait on his right hand, a little above his head; a wonderful presence in its heavy frame on the flimsy wall of mats, looking exiled and at home, out of place and masterful, in the painted immobility of the profile. . . . It seemed to him that he was hearing his father's voice, speaking and ceasing and speaking again. Startled at first, he ended by finding a charm in the illusion. He abandoned himself to the half-belief that something of his father dwelt yet on earth--a ghostly voice, audible to the ear of his own flesh and blood. (183-84)

Heyst sits 'under' his father's portrait, with "a vivid consciousness of the portrait," "a wonderful presence," and reads his book. By repeating the "presence" of the elder Heyst, Conrad suggests the depth of the son's allegiance to the father, an intense emotional bond with the philosopher which is further confirmed by the son's hearing the father's "voice," or his appreciating the thinker's point of view with regard to life. Oppressed by the sense of the world's wickedness, Heyst seems to have returned to his youthful days when the "cold blasts of the father's analysis" first produced in the son "a profound mistrust of life" (87). The voice warns Heyst against all engagements, especially love, which is, "of the stratagems of life the most cruel." Yet it is significant that Heyst cannot remain committed to nihilism because Lena won't allow it.

Interestingy enough, Heyst's hearing of his father's voice is interrupted by "Lena's voice [which] spoke above his head in the manner of Heyst's father's voice. However, her voice has an entirely different meaning: it indicates her attempt to help Heyst achieve a social self. To emphasize this the narrator now writes, specifically, from Lena's perspective:

> 'You sit there as if you were unhappy.'
>
> 'I thought you were asleep,' he said.
>
> 'I was lying down right enough, but I never closed my eyes.'
>
> 'The rest would have done you good after walk. Didn't you try?'
>
> 'I was lying down, I tell you, but sleep I couldn't.'
>
> 'And you made no sound! What want of sincerity. Or did you want to be alone for a time?'
>
> 'I alone! ' She murmured. (184-85)

Lena's concluding remark reveals her protest against isolation and negation that Heyst has just been relearning from his father's book. She suggests that she cannot even stand the idea of being separated from him even for a very short time. Lena's role is, then, the opposite of Felicia Moorsom. Lena draws Heyst towards relationship, while Felicia pushes Renouard back into his isolation.

When protests like the above fail, Lena appeals to Heyst directly:

> 'You should try to love me!' she said.
>
> . . .
>
> 'I have done nothing,' she said in a low voice.
>
> 'It's you who have been good, helpful, and tender to me. Perhaps you love me for that--just for that; or perhaps you love me for company, and because --well! But sometimes it seems to me that you can never love me for myself, as people do love each other when it is to be for ever!'
>
> Her head drooped. 'For ever,' she breathed out again; then, still more faintly, she added the entreating: 'Do try.' (185)

Lena's forceful appeal has an immediate effect on Heyst, for her last words "went straight to his heart," and all "his defences were broken now. Life had him by the throat" (186). Heyst finds that "all his cherished negations were falling off him one by one" (187). Heyst is now closer to expressing his love for her than ever before, for he says to her: "There is that in you, Lena, which can console me for worse things [than the calumny about the treatment of Morrison], for uglier passages" (187). Thus Heyst expresses his trust in her, and then he embraces her, an act which indicates his desire to affirm his love for her and his moral need to accept life in community.

If disruption of chronology and shift in time and view is Conrad's means of stressing Heyst's need for communion with others, narrative sequence is his means of emphasizing

Heyst's ability for fellowship. The action in the later half of the novel is chronological and it focuses uninterruptedly on Lena's role in providing Heyst with this ability. Lena decides that she must help Heyst to affirm his love for and communion with her. To achieve this goal she must, she thinks, give herself up to him more completely, by some act of absolute sacrifice. The arrival of the Jones gang on Samburan provides Lena with an opportunity to achieve her objective. Ricardo threatens to kill Heyst with his knife, and she secures the knife from Ricardo, and thus brings death upon herself.[12] Lena, however, believes that she has made her sacrifice and saved Heyst's life: "I have done it! I would never have let him. . ." (322). Lena's sacrifice is a demonstration of her love for Heyst; it symbolises the bond with humanity found in the love of a man and woman. And her sacrifice achieves, as she had hoped, Heyst's reunion with society.

By shifting time and viewpoints, Conrad has, then, analysed Heyst's moral limitations to emphasize his need to integrate himself into human community. In the final chapters of the novel, the narrator writes mainly from Heyst's perspective and demonstrates his moral capacity for communion. Heyst responds toLena's plea that he take her into his arms by cursing "his fastidious soul, which even at that moment kept the true cry of love from his lips in its infernal mistrust of all life" (324). Heyst's cursing suggests his rejection of the philosophy of detachment and indicates that he now sees the folly of an isolated existence, which has for so long rendered him incapable of a direct statement of love. Yet through a symbolic gesture he affirms his love for Lena:

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[12] In order to secure the knife Lena pretends to accept the advances of Ricardo. Finding Ricardo at her feet Jones, who has a pathological horror of women, fires a shot at Ricardo in an attempt to kill him. But his bullet kills Lena instead.

> She tried to raise herself, but all she could do was to lift her head a little from the pillow. With a terrified and gentle movement, _Heyst hastened to slip his arm under her neck._ She felt relieved at once of an intolerable weight, and was content to surrender to him the infinite weariness of her tremendous achievement. . . . He was ready to lift her up in his firm arms and take her into the sanctuary of his innermost heart--for ever! (324)

Heyst's slipping his arm under Lena's neck suggests love and care for another human being and a retreat from extreme independent individualism. Heyst's gestures indicat his entry into human society, to which Conrad refers, in the preface to _The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'_, by the term "human solidarity,"

> . . . the subtle but invincible conviction of solidarity that knits together the loneliness of innumerable hearts, . . . the solidarity in dreams, in joy, in sorrow, in aspirations, in illusions, in hope, in fear, which binds men to each other, which

> binds together all humanity--the dead to the living and the living to the unborn. (12)

On the basis of common interests and an awareness of a common fate, human beings are members of a common "society," and one affirms his rootedness in this universal human community by his feeling of fellowship. Heyst's gestures indicate that he has become a member of this society, that he has gained a social self: he is now capable of love and care, of communion, qualities that make social life possible.

Those critics who see Conrad as a voice of modern pessimism overlook the social significance of Heyst's action but concentrate their attention on his suicide soon after Lena's death, which they regard only as an isolated individual's nihilistic denial of life. C. B. Cox, for instance, writes that

> . . . the imaginative impact of the final catastrophe does not support Leavis' optimism [that Heyst's victory is for life]. In his passion for Lena, Heyst discovers a greater sense of his own reality than he had ever known before, but this awakened consciousness leads him inevitably to death.[13]

Critics like Cox look for support for their assertion that Heyst's suicide is a denial of life in what Heyst says to Davidson before he goes to his death: "Ah! Davidson, woe to the man whose heart has not learned while young to hope, to love--and to put trust in life!!" (326). They believe because Heyst fails to put trust in life he commits suicide. Heyst's comment, however, means something quite different. What he suggests is that if he had learned to love and trust early, he would have lived a meaningful life in society and, we may surmise, if he had learned to do so by the time he met Lena, he would not have had to lose her. He and Lena would have been living with other humans in society. Yet Heyst has, although belatedly, learned to love and trust,[14] as his taking Lena into his arms suggests.

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[13] C. B. Cox, *Joseph Conrad: The Modern Imagination* (London: Dent, 1974) 136.

The suicide is a staement of his love for, and trust in, Lena; it is a sacrifice for the person he loves. And the sacrifice is best understood in the light of Conrad's remarks in his essay, "Henry James":

> That a sacrifice must be made, that something has to be given up, is the truth engraved in the innermost recesses of the fair temple built for our edification by the masters of fiction. There is no other secret behind the curtain. All adventure, all love, every success is resumed in the supreme energy of an act of renunciation. It is the utmost limit of

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[14] As Adam Gillon remarks, "The tie with Lena, which, like everything else, has seemed vague and inidsinct, is now real; so real, indeed, that he cannot go on living because he cannot stand his thoughts before Lena's dead body. . . . Now, for the first time in his life, Heyst speaks with an accent of unconcealed despair. Paradoxically enough, his suicide is the ultimate manifestation of Heyst's redemption: it symbolises his return to humanity." See, The Eternal Solitary (New york: Bookman Associates, 1960) 140.

> our power; it is the most potent and effective force at our disposal on which rest the labours of a solitary man in his study, the rock on which have been built commonwealth whose might casts a dwarfing shadow upon two oceans. Like a natural force which is obscured as much as illuminated by the multiplicity of phenomena, the power of renunciation is obscured by the mass of weaknesses, vacillations, secondary motives and false steps and compromises which make up the sum of our activity. But no man or woman worthy of the name, can pretend to anything more, to anything greater."[illegible]

There is no better statement in Conrad on the need for renunciation or sacrifice. And there is no better fictional illustration in his writings of this spirit of sacrifice than Heyst's suicide. His death is an illustration of his commitment to Lena, and it "represents the victory he has won . . . against those elements in his nature that had led him to despise and isolate himself from, his fellow men."[illegible] Heyst's sacrifice is an affirmation of his solidarity with Lena, and with her, with the larger society of human beings. Karl rightly suggets that Heyst is a "living example of Donne's proposition that no man is an island unto himself and human solidarity must take precedence over the

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[illegible] Joseph Conrad, *Notes on Life and Letters* (London: Dent, 1921) 19-20.

[illegible] Andreas, 163.

individual will."'’

What makes possible Heyst's attainment of a social self is his social instinct, his impulsive sympathy, which involves him in the world. And the world, which is represented not only by the Schombergs, the Joneses, and Ricardos, but also by the Lenas, helps Heyst to see, and accept, the good of humanity. Conrad suggests that we cannot live on islands to escape the Schombergs and Joneses and Ricardos; we must live in society to keep such forces from operating and fulfill ourselves, as Heyst did, in meaningful relationships with the Lenas.

As we have seen, Victory offers Conrad's vision of the solitary individual's attainment of a social self. Heyst begins as an individual who is committed to isolation, but as he involves himself with people he gradually learns to commit himself to others. Thus he stands in sharp contrast to Renouard, who isolates himself from his kind and loses the capacity for human relationships and life in society. To read "The Planter of Malata" and then go on to Victory is, then, to proceed from a story about a man's life-denying individualism to a novel about a man's relation to the human communion.

Conrad skillfully uses a single narrator and linear and cumulative narrative blocks to focus on Renouard's situation in "The Planter of Malata." In Victory, on the other hand, he employs unchronological time and different perspectives

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'’ A Reader's Guide to Conrad, 265.

to expose the limitations of Heyst's philosophy and to suggest the moral imperative that Heyst integrate himself into society. And by means of the perspecctives of Lena and Heyst in the narrative present, Conrad depicts Heyst's attainment of a social self.

VI. Conclusion

Conrad views man as a separate being and as an alienated individual who learns to integrate himself into society. In those of his works that depict his social vision, Conrad's imagination is primarily concerned with articulating his characters' change or progress to a social reality. The change often comes late, as in the cases of Jim, Razumov, and Heyst, but, as Wm. Wallace Bancroft suggests, "the lateness of the triumph . . . is due to conditions that must be fulfilled before life unfolds its meaning."''

Conrad's shorter works and novels well illustrate his double vision of isolation and social integration. His practice is to write short fiction and novels to present a vision of isolation and to delineate both separateness and solidarity. Conrad's handling of the theme of isolation in "The Return" and *The Secret Agent* indicates that while the short story deals with lonely individuals cut off from society, the novel can equally claim that theme as its property. Conrad's more representative practice, however, is to use novels as social counterparts to his stories, as the relationships between "Karain" and *Lord Jim*, "The Secret Sharer" and *Under Western Eyes*, and "The Planter of Malata" and *Victory* demonstrate. Another pair of works, "Freya of the Seven Isles" and *Chance*, also illustrates Conrad's practice.

''*Joseph Conrad: His Philosophy of Life* (1933; New York: Haskell House, 1964) 90.

Written during an interlude in the composition of Chance,[99] "Freya" is the other side of the longer work: while Freya of the story is isolated throughout, Flora of the novel overcomes her isolation through commitment to another person. The narrator of the story presents, in a straightforward manner, his memory of Freya; the presentation has, roughly speaking, three different stages: a description of the initial impression of Freya, the treatment of the conflict arising from Freya's decision to put her marriage on hold, and the account of the destruction of Jasper's brig and Freya's attitude to Jasper. Conrad uses these stages cumulatively to create a strong impression of Freya's isolation.

Freya lost her mother at the age of twelve, and lived for the next six years with a kind lady in Singapore, as we learn in the opening pages. When she joins her father on the islands, she evokes in the observer a feeling of her "strength, and . . . unconscious self-confidence."[100] Her sense of her own power and self-sufficiency isolates her from people. She is ostensibly in love with Jasper, but cannot relate to, or feel any need for him, and, as we hear in part 2, her real desire is to be "mistress of the dear brig and sail about these seas" (145). Her unrelatedness manifests also in her decision to put off her marriage with Jasper on the convenient ground that "there shall be no mistake in people's mind as to me being old enough to know what I am doing" (149). As she does not need others, she is content to remain apart and to fulfill her own need, to "rule over the beautiful brig . . ." (149). There is much truth to the statement she makes to Jasper: "no one could carry me off. Not even you. I am not the sort of girl that gets carried off" (168).

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[99] Chance was begun April 1905 and finished 25 March 1912. "Freya" was started 26 December 1910 and completed 28 February 1911. See Rosalind Smith, "Dates of Composition of Conrad's Works," Conradiana XI, 1 (1979) 77.

[100] Joseph Conrad, 'Twixt Land and Sea (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980) 135. Subsequent references, cited parenthetically, are to this edition.

In the final stage of narration, which includes a ponderous account of Heemskirk's destruction of Jasper's brig, the main moral interest is in Freya's reaction to the catastrophe, which emphasizes her isolation. Upon hearing of the destruction of the brig, she cannot relate to Jasper's sorrow, but is preoccupied with her own loss, her inability to fulfill her dream of becoming the mistress of the brig; and she expresses her frustration with her "I will never forgive him! (205) Later, she tells her father that "perhaps, when the day came I would not have gone" (208)--she is referring to the arrangement she and Jasper made to elope when she turned twenty-one. It is clear, therefore, despite her flirtations with Jasper, she has always been isolated from him.

Bernard Meyer suggests that in creating Flora, Conrad was "repeating the image of the powerful Freya whose hair-raising piano-playing is accompanied by flashes of lightning and roar of thunder"[101]--he is commenting on a passage in Chance which compares Flora's power to that of electricity. Freya's living (from age 12 up to 18) with a person other than her parent has produced a feeling of self-confidence and strength, thereby isolating her from other humans. Flora's upbringing and misfortunes have created in her a sense of power, evident in her defiance of others. Her defiance is the manifestation of her isolation. Conrad's moral interest in Chance, however, is not only to present Flora's separateness but also to show how she she realizes her social identity through a relationship with Roderick Anthony who, as Paul Wiley suggests, is Jasper Allen's successor "at least in his extremely idealistic attitude towards woman and his capacity for intense emotion."[102] While a linear narrative, which uses its different parts cumulatively, portrays Freya's isolation, an extremely complicated technique of shifting time and point of view and a relatively linear narrative sequence depicts Flora's isolation and attainment of a social identity.

It is largely through Marlow that Conrad presents his vision of Flora. In Lord Jim and "Heart of Darkness," Marlow's information derives from his direct involvement in the action of the works and the lives of the characters or from people who directly impart it to him. But much of Marlow's information in Chance is gained at second or third hand. Despite this apparent limitation, Marlow, like the narrator of "Freya,"[103] arranges his information effectively to portray the main character's situation.

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[101] Meyer, 226.
[102] Paul L. Wiley, Conrad's Measure of Man (Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1954) 141.

After an opening section in which Powell tells of the circumstances of his first job as second officer under Captain Anthony of the Ferndale, who has his wife Flora with him on board, Marlow in the next chapter takes us to an earlier time in the life of Flora, and presents her near suicide from his perspective. The presentation reveals Flora's sense of her own power, her ability to do whatever she wishes in defiance of people's feelings, and thus indicates her emotional isolation. When Marlow expresses his concern that she was walking perilously close to the edge of the quarry pit and she could fall into the abyss, Flora answers: "I don't see why I shouldn't be as reckless as I please."[104] Flora cannot see that her death might shock others, for she is detached from them emotionally: "once one was dead, what horrid people thought of one did not matter" (36). The "horrid people" here refers to Flora's governess, who abuses her after her father has gone bankrupt, and her relations who call her a pauper and the daughter of a convict. Marlow suggests early in the novel that Flora's defiance, her isolation is the result of her upbringing and her misfortunes. It is to emphasize this that soon after his recollection of Flora's attempted suicide, he retreats into an even earlier time in Flora's life and presents, from Mrs. Fyne's perspective, a complete history of Flora's younger years, her suffering in the hands of various people, which has produced her spirit of defiance, and has led her to believe that people like the governess and her cousins are not her own kind, that she can do without them.

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[103] See in this connection, Palmer, 231-32. Palmer points out the striking similarities between the story's narrator and Marlow.

[104] Joseph Conrad, Chance (London: Methuen, 1912) 35. Subsequent references, quoted parenthetically, are to this edition.

Following the account of Flora's victimization, there is a shift in time, bringing us back to the time soon after Flora's attempted suicide and elopement with Anthony. Marlow and Fyne are in London to persuade Anthony against marrying Flora. But while standing in the street, Marlow takes us back to the time when Anthony proposed to Flora, and writes from her perspective:

> "You have understood?"
>
> She looked at him in silence.
>
> "That I love you," he finished.
>
> She shook her head the least bit.
>
> "Don't you believe me?" he asked in a low, infuriated voice
>
> "Nobody would love me," she answered in a very quiet tone. Nobody could." (180)

Flora here defies Anthony's feelings, enjoys her power to tell him that she is different and detached from other humans, that nobody could love her.

The above remarks give some idea of Chance's complex method. Conrad's narrator shifts time to present a situation from different perspectives--a method which, as we have seen, Conrad used in Lord Jim and Victory. This method is, we may add, also reminiscent of Nostromo. The second chapter of Nostromo introduces the bumptious Captain Mitchell, who disapproves of "the frequent changes of governmnet brought about by revolutions of the military type."[105] This is sometime after the downfall of the president-dictator Ribiera. We soon move back in time, first to the day (eighteen months before the outbreak of the revolution which brings the dictator's rule to an end) on which Ribiera appears in Sulaco to grace the first sod for the railway; then, we spiral further back in time, to the days of the reopening of the mine, even before Ribiera has come to power. At this point in time Mrs. Gould's perspective in regard to Costaguana's history is given to us: "In all these houses she could hear stories of political outrage . . ." (84). The narrative eventually takes us forward to the time when Captain Mitchell has gone home to England, after Ribiera has been put into power, dethroned, Sulaco has seceded from the rest of Costaguana and become an independent state. Yet the possibility of strife is imminent, for Sulaco is conspiring to invade Costaguana. Dr. Monygham's perspective makes clear that chaos and struggle are to continue. In response to Mrs. Gould's question, "Will there be no rest?" he utters an emphatic "No!" (419).

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[105] Joseph Conrad, Nostromo (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1980) 22. Subsequent references, quoted parenthetically, are to this edition.

Conrad's technique achieves a plausible analysis of the situation of Costaguana, of its endless chaos, atrocities, and strife. When one character, at the opening of the book, reports that Costaguana's history has been one of struggle and falling apart of governments, another character from a much earlier time reasserts the same view of violence and lawlessness, and still another character from a future time reinforces the idea, then the author's vision of history as anarchy receives a stereoscopic quality.

In Chance, as we move from one time to another, and with that from one perspective to the next, our sense of Flora's isolation becomes strong. The presentation of isolation, however, is a necessary step towards the depiction of her achievement of community. The novel is about Flora's moral progress, and Conrad emphasizes isolation in the beginning because he wants to show that she progresses from this emotional state to a sense of fellowship. To present her development, Conrad treats Flora's and Anthony's relationship differently from that of Freya and Jasper's. Freya cannot come close to jasper emotionally, while Flora does commit herself to Anthony. The second part of the novel uses a relatively chronological narrative, which focuses on Flora's gradual movement towards Anthony. Marlow presents this movement by spinning yarn from the hints thrown out by Powell, the second officer of the the Ferndale, on which takes place Flora's change. The change takes time because Flora's father, who is on board the ship after a jail term, competes with Anthony for Flora's love. Out of jealousy he pours poison into Anthony's drink, is caught, and when Anthony vows to give Flora up, Flora expresses her commitment to the captain: "You can't cast me out like this, Roderick. I won't go away from you. I won't---" Flora confirms her fellowship with Anthony as she flies into his arms and finds peace in "Anthony's clasp" (338). Flora's surrendering herself to Anthony, like Heyst's taking Lena into his arms, suggests her participation in the universal human community, her solidarity with another human being.

As the examination of Conrad's works from his different writing periods confirms, Conrad views man as an isolated individual and as a participant in human community. He writes short fiction and novels to present an aspect of his double vision and both aspects of his contemplation. An extremely conscious craftsman, Conrad uses effective methods for the presentation of his vision: simple and single narrative perspectives, linear action, and cumulative narrative blocks in the short stories; dislocated chronology, narrative sequence, and multiple perspectives in the novels.

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